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AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS

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"Whose Service is Perfect Freedom"

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PREFACE

THE READY RECEPTION accorded to the author's previous volume, *In Understanding be Men*, which represented an attempt to interest his non-theological student friends in the rich fields of Evangelical Theology, encourages him to hope that some of them will welcome this further synopsis. It aims to introduce them to Christian Ethics, a field of study which is closely allied to Theology.

It will readily be appreciated by most readers that there are certain difficulties connected with the body of Christian teaching surveyed in this present volume, which here and there involve the author in the necessity of expressing a personal view on the one hand and, for reasons of space, omitting a discussion of the merits and demerits of alternative or conflicting views, on the other. The indulgence of the reader, and especially that of any fellow theological student into whose hands the book may happen to fall, is asked in the following matters:

(i) It has not proved possible to examine at all fully the various philosophical (and, in some cases, psychological) questions underlying the problems which are discussed in certain sections of the book. For one reason, those who desire such critical analyses may refer to existing text-books and special treatises on these subjects and, for another, the author would be compelled to enter into those deeper philosophical discussions which would demand the use of technical phraseology. The author believes the latter to be one of the chief causes which deter the average student from considering these matters. He sincerely hopes, however, that he has permitted no statements to appear which are definitely unscientific or unphilosophical.

(ii) The book is not, and is not intended to be, a system of rules for conduct. There is always a danger that a book on Ethics may come to be used as such. A legalistic conception of Christian conduct is apt to creep in before the individual is aware of the beginnings of any wrong attitude. If this book comes to be used as in any sense an objective standard for Christian conduct, it will have failed

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in its primary purpose—viz., to point to the One Who declared to His disciples, " Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you *free*."

(iii) Since the book is intended for the use of Christians, the author has not debated at any length the question of whether or not the use of the terms " Christian Ethics " and " Natural Ethics " is desirable. He may express the personal conviction that such adjectives are helpful as indicating the origin of the basic principles of conduct. Some may be disposed to criticise the comparatively small amount of space devoted to the latter. In reply, it may be sufficient to point out that there are many cheap available books to which the student may refer for this and all too few which seek primarily to demonstrate the unique claims of the Christian ethical standard.

Finally, the writer desires to make no secret that he has a " point of view." He is convinced that the focal point and controlling principle in all approach to the study of either Theology, or of Ethics, is the Sovereignty of God, Who has revealed His will to man. He fails to see how the Christian can for long exclude the fact of the Divine Sovereignty from his deliberations. Yet there are some Christians—even prominent leaders—who appear content both in theory and practice to accept a standard which is little in advance of the findings of Natural Ethics. For them the biblical revelation of the sovereign trinity—redeeming, regenerating and sanctifying—would seem to be in vain. Let us remind ourselves that " we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

METHODS OF STUDY

THE BOOK is arranged as follows:

(i) An outline of the main problems connected with the particular branch of Christian Ethics under discussion, followed in some cases by a discussion of divergent views either within or without the Church. This forms the main part of the work. It will be noted that the chapters are divided into six sections.

(ii) A selection of Scriptures which bear upon the various problems connected with Christian conduct (Appendix I). It is to be particularly noted that the Scriptures must be interpreted in the light of their context. The student must learn to resist the temptation to erect a sweeping generalisation on the basis of one or two isolated texts.

Care is needed that "proof texts" should always be handled with care and in due relation to their context. Napoleon when cataloguing his books is said to have classified the Bible as "political"! Let us strive to bear in mind that the Divine matters on which the Bible speaks to the Church are to be kept in their proper relation to one another.

(iii) Questions designed to direct the student's attention to a more careful examination of points of special significance (Appendix II).

(iv) A Bibliography to encourage him to refer to larger works, so that he may learn to avail himself of some of the more detailed treatises on any of the divisions of the subject in which he is particularly interested (Appendix III).

It is recommended that the student should work steadily through the book, giving an evening (*e.g.*, a Saturday evening) or some other definite weekly period to each subsection. He should, when possible, write out the answers to the questions without reference to this book, after turning up the Scripture references. He should check his answers where possible from a larger work (see Bibliography). For group study, each member of the circle should have read carefully through the selected sections and studied the selected Scriptures prior to the meeting. The leader will

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INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

THE NEED AND URGENCY OF THE STUDY

"WHAT OUGHT I to do about it?" In this and similar everyday questions, with which every reader is familiar, lies the fundamental problem of Ethics. The very form of the question suggests that the inquirer has a deep-seated feeling that there is some form of responsibility connected with his choice, and that there is a right and wrong mode of action. This remains true even though he may occupy himself solely with the ultimate results to himself which may accrue from the directions his response to any given situation may take. The very frequency with which the question is asked underlines, too, the intensely practical nature of the problem. During the Christian's ordinary working day, for every thought given to a theological, or any other theoretical consideration, a hundred or more will be given to conduct. Far be it from the author to suggest that the two are unconnected or are to be detached. It is but a statement of fact to claim that by the average person—Christians (or for that matter non-Christians)—far more deliberate thought is given to the problems of conduct than to those of belief.

Whilst the problem is universal, the English-speaking nations have always had a tendency to lay stress—perhaps to an undue degree—upon the more practical side of Theology or Philosophy. In a speech before the Assembly of the Congregational Union, London, May, 1931, Earl Baldwin, referring to a lecture by Professor Macneile Dixon on "The English Soul," declared: "In Dr. Dixon's view the key to the secret of the English soul is that the reflective English mind has always been burdened with the sense of mystery, the unfathomable nature of things, and that this is felt more deeply and intensely by our people than by

any other European race. The English race is the serious child of the European family. England, he reminds us, has been called 'the chosen home of moral philosophy,' and the thought that a work of art may be good artistically and bad morally is foreign, even repugnant to the English mind. Everything seems to us a part of conduct.

"It is this preoccupation with moral conduct which has so often puzzled continental observers, who find it difficult to believe in the sincerity of our idealism, and are apt to describe it by a less pleasant name. Historical accuracy compels them to admit that we have been the champions of spiritual movements throughout the world, and the political ally of every great religious force, Protestantism and Catholicism, Hinduism and Mohammedanism. It is absurd to regard this as deep cunning on our part. It is a genuine manifestation of national character; and if our idealism is soiled and stained when we translate it into economic and political institutions, that also we must admit to be true, and proof of our fallibility."

But at no time in their history have these nations been confronted with such conflicting opinions as to the right solution of urgent and fundamental problems, or witnessed such a relaxation of, or feeble application of, the principles which underlie these conflicting opinions. In few circles, political, social or religious, is there any clear-cut and coherent philosophy of life. There are few beliefs or phases of conduct which are regarded as "black" or "white," everything is grey! It may perhaps be retorted that life may have been intended to be grey! The answer symbolises one of the problems connected with our study—With what colour was life intended to be bedecked?

In the international, political and social realms, at least, the problems of Ethics are assuming vast proportions and an urgency which ought to be apparent to the most casual reader. If the leaders of the so-called Christian West pursue certain courses of action in the present crisis the very existence of modern civilisation may be threatened. Signs are not wanting that in the very near future all members of the Christian Churches will be forced individually to endure a severe testing of their theological convictions and will find themselves in circumstances in which persistence in some of their present modes of living will bring to them the severest of penalties. If they feel called

upon to refuse to comply with what they may denounce as the unjust demands of a totalitarian state (in any of its forms), on what grounds will they resist them? The form in which their theological opinions will be put to the test will be intensely practical rather than theoretical. A glance at the newspapers, whether they are reporting on home or foreign news, should convince the most casual Christian of the urgency of the problem which it is the purpose of this book to examine.

During the first centuries, Christian thought was engaged in seeking for a true expression of the Person of Christ, the Redeemer of His people. Later, more attention was given to the problem of redemption itself. At the Reformation, emphasis was laid on the application of redemption in Christ as the Justifier of the believer. In recent years, the ethical implications of the Gospel have been canvassed carefully. In the present time of weakness and peril, the Church needs more than ever to turn to her Liberator, Who alone can deliver her from the bondage of sin and the present world system.

Speaking recently in New York, the well-known scientist Professor Albert Einstein said, " The political and economic complexities of the last few decades have brought before our eyes dangers that even the darkest pessimists of the last century did not dream of. The injunctions of the Bible concerning human conduct were then accepted by believer and infidel alike as self-evident demands for individuals and society. No one would have been taken seriously who failed to acknowledge the quest for objective truth and knowledge as man's highest and eternal aim. Yet today we must recognise with horror that these pillars of civilised human existence have lost their firmness. Nations that once ranked high bow down before tyrants who dare openly to assert: Right is that which serves us !"

Nor do these exhaust the reasons which could be urged in support of the claim that every Christian ought to be thoroughly conversant with, and convinced about, principles which should govern his or her conduct. There is a supreme consideration for the Christian—we are commanded by our Lord to follow His example.

Hand in hand with the widespread rejection of all forms of belief in the supernatural, which has resulted from the ill-digested influences of modern scientific teaching, has

come an increasing revolt against specifically Christian Ethics. The two movements hostile to Christianity must necessarily go together. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Christian should not only be convinced theologically, but should be able to trace as clearly as possible the logical outcome of the rival systems in the field of Ethics, where the pragmatic test, if no other, places Christianity in an unchallengeable position. If the disciple is unaware of his Master's unapproached supremacy in any other sphere, let him acclaim Him in this. When the non-Christian philosopher has done his best—to whatever school he may belong—there is still a gulf between his world-view and that of the Christian.

In no other branch of study does the censor of Christianity demonstrate his own weakness and littleness so fully as in that of Ethics. No representative of the world's philosophers bears any close comparison with the matchless Christ or even with the best of His followers. Let the reader take pains to assure himself from the evidence provided in the Gospels that our Lord Jesus Christ is ethically incomparable. Finally, let him notice that this same Lord Jesus has established His kingdom in the hearts of His people and that in a very real sense the community of saved men is to be subject to the laws of that kingdom. To use St. Paul's graphic description, "the Christian's citizenship is in heaven." The exegetes have frequently pointed out that the Philippians would have been reminded by this allusion to citizenship that their city was a Roman colony and was administered under laws which were different from and above those which governed their neighbours. So are the Christians of every nation to remind themselves that they are "a colony of heaven." Even if those around us are following the ordinary moral codes regulating the multitude, and are satisfied with the fashions of the day—we are to remember that we are destined for residence in the Imperial City and that we are already invited to get into accord with its standards. It is surely our highest wisdom and duty not only to familiarise ourselves with differences between the human and Divine standards, but to enter into our birthright and to appropriate the freedom of the City to which we belong.

CHAPTER II

THE SCOPE AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE SUBJECT

A. The Meaning of the Term "Ethics"

The term "ethics" is a transliteration of the Greek *τὰ ἠθικά*, derived from *ἦθος*, the character, and conveying also the idea of customs or habits. As defined by Aristotle, Ethics is that branch of science which is concerned with the human character. To modern readers the word "character" probably conveys a more subjective meaning (in the modern use of "subjective") than most of the ancient philosophers would have attached to it. In its original setting the term was associated with the study of the prevailing customs of the day (dealing more with externals than modern Ethics). The modern tendency is to be occupied with the psychological problems which are associated with the various phases of conduct. Such a distinction must, however, be made with care. The Greek philosophers anticipated the chief problems of modern Ethics and have exercised lasting influence on the whole study.

A distinction, however, needs to be kept between the words "morality" and "Ethics." There were "customs," or "morals," amongst men before they were subjected to scrutiny in the science of Ethics. It is necessary, therefore, to go beyond derivation to secure a clear idea of the modern use of the term, and of the ultimate aims and scope of this branch of study.

B. Distinction between Natural Ethics and Christian Ethics

There is a very real distinction between what may be called Natural Ethics and Christian Ethics, although there are reasons why the terms used in describing the two systems are not wholly satisfactory. Roman Catholic scholars use the terms Moral Philosophy and Moral Theology in describing this division (but their Moral Theology is by no means always the same as the Protestant Christian

Ethics). There is nothing to be gained on the part of Christians by ignoring or belittling the difference between the moral implications of the various systems of Philosophy and the moral implications of the Christian Revelation. The division is fundamentally the same as that between Natural Theology, which represents the knowledge of God of which the unaided human reason is capable, and Christian Theology, which transcends Natural Theology and brings to the enlightened a totally new world view. The difference is nowhere better expressed than in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. ii. 1-16). In the same way, the New Testament Revelation has put the study of Ethics on to an entirely new plane for the Christian. It does not deny that there are large elements of truth in Natural Ethics, but it provides the Christian with a new and higher standard, or norm, a new motive for the pursuit of that norm and a new power to aid attainment. Natural Ethics, however, has its value not merely for purposes of comparison with, and exhibition of, Christian Ethics, but also as providing a scientific analytical test of the truth of the latter.

The following points are to be noticed in relation to *Natural Ethics* :

(i) It is the branch of Philosophy which is concerned with the answer to the question: " What is the ultimate *purpose* of my existence as a moral being, and how am I to achieve it ?" In other words, it is the study of the " ideal " in human conduct. The other two main divisions of Philosophy are concerned with the answers to the questions, (*a*) " What is the ultimate reality ?" (Metaphysics) and (*b*) " What am I and how do I know I exist ?" (Epistemology). (But see the more detailed classification in the next section, page 31.) The study of Ethics is therefore the most practical branch of Philosophy.

(ii) Another method of expressing the aim of the inquiry is: Ethics is an attempt to determine what is to be considered as the highest conceivable state of well-being for mankind (Lat. " summum bonum "). This, however, lays stress upon only one side of the inquiry.

(iii) While the study of Ethics holds firmly to the ultimate rational basis of all conduct, and therefore regards moral action as capable of rational proof, it does not insist that such proof is fully apparent in any given case. But what it does set out to do is to test, and assess the relative merits

of, beliefs concerning human conduct. It is chiefly concerned to discover the grounds on which these beliefs are held and to determine which of them has a valid claim to universal acceptance.

(iv) In relation to what is called the "moral standard," Natural Ethics examines rival theories, and seeks to establish a system in accordance with right reason in the widest sense of that term. Obviously, in the case of individual philosophers, the choice between rival systems will be largely determined by the particular metaphysical theory adopted by the investigator. The result may, and probably will, be unsatisfying to the Christian, who is unable to banish from his mind his conviction of the exclusiveness of the claims based upon the supremacy of Divine revelation.

Of *Christian Ethics* little need be said here, seeing that its distinctive claims will be discussed in the appropriate section (see pages 38 and 150 *ff*). The following, however, should be noticed:

(i) It is closely associated with the Christian Theology and accepts the latter's fundamental premisses. Whilst gleaning all that is true and suggestive from the various philosophical systems and their ethical findings, it can never surrender the point of vantage from which it starts —the unique revelation of God in Christ. An uncompromising supernaturalism is placed over against all naturalism, and even against the supernaturalism which places unaided man in a position of authority.

(ii) The claim of Christian Theology that the self-revelation of God in Christ has its counterpart in the lives of individual men who are "born anew," by a supernatural intervention of the Spirit of God, leaves no manner of doubt in the Christian's mind as to what constitutes the "moral standard." To the question "What is the chief end (aim or purpose) of man?" he unhesitatingly replies: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever." The will of God, made known to him in Jesus Christ by the operation of the Divine Spirit, constitutes the norm.

(iii) It is incumbent on those who object to the claim made by the Christian for a *distinctively Christian* Ethics to explain how the Christian can eliminate from his thought such revolutionary concepts as the Divine Sovereignty, Revelation, Depravation, Incarnation, Propitiation, Regeneration and Final Consummation. Christianity can never be

treated as a mere " school " of Philosophy, and particularly so in the realm of Ethics.

C. Scope of Ethics

As a preliminary to understanding its scope, the study needs to be related to the other Sciences and Arts. It is to be classified not as a positive or " descriptive " science (as for example the Natural Sciences) but as a " Normative " or " Directive " Science—*i.e.*, it seeks to discover and to enforce the Ideal in human conduct. It is concerned with the ultimate end of human activities and the right methods of their attainment. There are, therefore, of necessity, large elements of Theology, Philosophy and Psychology contributing to its successful pursuit, but it yet retains its own field and its own unique contributions to knowledge. This consists in the attempt to solve the mystery of the claims of the " I ought " or " You ought." The field with which the study of Ethics deals may be divided into three:

(i) The *ideal* of the moral life—answering such questions as " What is man's ' highest good ' ?", " For what final end ought I to live ?"

(ii) Theories as to the *Moral Standard*, or " Norm "—answering such questions as " What is the ultimate standard by which all phases of conduct can be tested and which is finally binding on all men ?"

(iii) *The applications* of this norm to the everyday circumstances of the moral life—answering the questions as to how the various principles can be worked out in the individual's own life, and his relations with the vicissitudes of that of the community.

As a possible fourth section of the study may be included the psychological problems connected with the individual's reactions and ability to carry out these principles. Whether or not these ethical principles are carried into practice ultimately depends on a man's *will*. Since mankind has been permitted self-determining activity, the science of Ethics is faced with the difficulties connected with applying such adjectives as " good " and " bad " to the will, and this raises the further problems of " desire " and " motive," and introduces questions as to the very nature of what may be called the " moral consciousness " or " moral self."

Because of the latter considerations, there has been con-

siderable discussion as to whether Ethics is to be considered as a Science, or an Art, or whether it has elements of both. There are objections to the use of the term Art as applied to Ethics.

In the case of the Arts, the points of primary interest are the actual products of human activity, whereas Ethics is concerned with an analysis of the motives and aims which brought about the activity. Also Science, properly speaking, is concerned with the formulation of the laws describing the regular sequence of events which go to make up the observed facts. Ethics has affinities with both the Arts and the Sciences, but a greater affinity with the latter. Ethics is better described as a Science, and, better still (since the predominating aim is to discover the nature of the Ideal), as a branch of Philosophy, and the matter left at that.

The attempt which is sometimes made to divide the subject into three parts—a Philosophy (the metaphysics of Ethics), a Science (stating the general laws governing conduct), and an Art (their application to given circumstances)—has little to recommend it. A particular form of the subdivision mentioned is the rigid application of "Art" in the form it has taken in the Roman Catholic invention, "The Art of Casuistry." In the latter system, which found extensive development at the hands of the Jesuits, and an acute critic in Blaise Pascal, the Roman Church has undertaken to legislate for all the minutiæ of human life, and to provide a ready code to meet all emergencies. This casuistry has resulted in a formal legalism more oppressive than that of the Pharisees. It has issued in a determination of conduct and practice which is the negation of all that we understand by ethical. The defence is urged sometimes that the "Moral Theology" thus evolved is due to the necessity of dealing with moral pathological cases. But unfortunately the tendency has been to make the pathological the normal. Pascal's "Provincial Letters" are a satire, but an ethical system that lies open to such a satire stands self-condemned. It is no part of Protestant Christian Ethics to provide a system of set rules, and it is the glory of the Christian gospel that it has not done so. It will be one of the purposes in the subsequent pages to demonstrate that there is very definite *Divine* provision for the felt difficulty which "casuistry" has sought to dispel. Any Church which sets out to be "in-

fallible," will in the very nature of the case need casuistry. There is *one* appointed Guide for the Christian, and in his application of the ethical principles let him hear the voice of that Guide.

It is not denied, however, that there is some reason for the discussion, which has frequently been undertaken, as to whether Ethics as a whole is to be regarded as a Science or an Art. Various writers have taken different views and their treatment of the whole subject has necessarily been much coloured by that view. For besides its main affinities with Philosophy, there are large elements of both Science and Art in the study. Some have suggested that it should be classified as a "Practical Science" since it has a bearing on the practical requirements of everyday life. But the main aim of Ethics is speculative—*i.e.*, to arrive at an understanding of the essential nature of the Ideal rather than to obtain a series of detailed rules for everyday life. It has frequently been suggested that "A Science teaches a man *to know*, and an Art how *to do*, but a practical Science teaches him *to know how to do*." Those whose attitude to the study inclines them to lay stress on this latter element have hence placed the study of Ethics between Science and Art, seeking equally to emphasise the elements of both which undoubtedly come into the usual approach to the subject. But the reader will be well advised to concentrate his chief attention on the predominating philosophical element. If he can come to know the ultimate secret of the nature, origin and immediacy of the judgment "I ought," from which even the most depraved of men can find no escape, the elements of Science and Art will automatically find their proper place in his thinking. If he fails in his philosophical quest, his views of the latter must necessarily be correspondingly distorted.

It is, therefore, very important to remember that "good conduct" consists in definite and right action. It is not a capacity for doing something, nor is there (primarily) an interest in the product, as in Art. Its importance lies in the activity itself—the actual *right* doing. The problem is, strictly, why and how a man can continue to keep acting rightly and how can he know whether he really is acting "rightly"?

Hence the true aims and scope of the study of Ethics are to discover the answer to the three questions: (1) What is

the nature of the moral law? (2) From whence does it derive its authority? and (3) What general principles of conduct may be regarded as having universal application?

D. Difficulties

A further difficulty as to the scope of Ethics is experienced, however, when one sets out to add the adjective "Christian." The difficulty may be regarded from two different standpoints, represented by the questions:

(*a*) What significance does the adjective "Christian" bring? Is the Christian moral law of universal application to all men—*i.e.*, Are Christians possessed of the exclusively correct view of the nature of the universal moral standard? Or is there one standard for the Christian and another for the non-Christian (which would necessitate an alteration of the basic definitions given above)?

(*b*) Can there be a distinctively Christian Ethics? A closely associated question being—Are Christians correct in expecting non-Christians to display conduct which is "good" as judged by the full Christian standard?

In order to make the significance of these vital questions clearer, let the reader consider the origin of the claims made by Christians in their study of the problems of Ethics. They arise from the closely connected study of Theology. Indeed, it is impossible for the Christian to expel from his mind the influence of his doctrinal beliefs, even if he wished so to do. He can effect this expulsion less in the field of Ethics than in any other branch of study. It is not possible for any man who undertakes the study of Ethics to be uninfluenced by the general mental content which belongs to him, as it is on the basis of this mental content that he frames ethical judgments. Hence, if the Christian be once convinced that the main doctrines of Christian Theology are correct he must formulate his views on moral problems in relation to these standards. This is also true of the devotees of other religions. Religion and Ethics cannot be divorced, as some would suggest. The latter view arises from an overhasty definition of religion.

Some, indeed, have urged that it is not possible to allow the apposition of the two words "Christian" and "Ethics," or the objection has been more bluntly stated by the assertion that it is quite unscientific to attempt such a

study. In justice to scientists and philosophers, it must be acknowledged that it would be unnecessary and, in the commonly accepted meaning of the term, unscientific to attempt any such distinction as "Natural" Mathematics and "Christian" Mathematics, and "Natural" Chemistry and "Christian" Chemistry! From the very nature of what may be called the "descriptive" sciences, their basic laws remain the same for Christians and non-Christians alike. (This does not mean that the Christian is compelled to accept all the suggestions made when theories are attempted concerning origins, causation, etc.) But, in these sciences, the content is obtained by observation and experiment, and is, in a certain sense, external to the mental content already in possession, external at least in the sense that the result is not dependent on the direction of the individual's volitional attitude. An act of will is necessary even in a mathematical process, but the result is in large measure independent of the will. But in the case of the "Normative" Sciences a new and supernatural element enters which radically alters the Christian's whole attitude to them. If it be scientific rigidly to exclude all reference to God and the supernatural when approaching the study of Ethics, then Christian Ethics must be adjudged to that extent "unscientific." But the Christian may well ask whether it would be "scientific" for him artificially to banish from his thinking not merely the teachings of Christian Theology, not merely such significant events as the Incarnation, Life, Death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, but his own experiences of the work of God's Spirit, and observations of His work in the lives of others. It means the exclusion of the richest of human experience and the sublimest conceptions of the human intellect. Nor could religious experiences formed by other considerations, such as the awe inspired by nature, be validly excluded.

To put the matter in another way, the crux of this problem lies in the thinker's attitude of acceptance or non-acceptance of the Divine Revelation. If he refuses this Revelation, he will not be troubled by any considerations consequent on the biblical assertions concerning the Fall of man. The authority of God (if he takes it at all into his scheme) will be of the most general and inconsequential nature, and Jesus Christ will be just the greatest philosopher in several of the lines of development in the study of Ethics,

as the said thinker conceives it. To the Christian, on the other hand, the study of Ethics, as generally conceived, summarises the achievements of human thinking apart from special revelation. What may be termed "Natural" Ethics is certainly valuable in so far as it serves to emphasise and throw into greater relief the important aspects of revelation and, indeed, some conceptions will be found to be the same in both Natural and Christian Ethics. God's "common grace" has brought to men much which is shared by Christian and non-Christian alike (Matt. v. 45 and Rom. i. 19, 20), but His "special grace," revealed in Christ, lifts the believer into what is for him a totally new outlook on the purpose of life and its conduct (1 Cor. ii.). In so far as a human illustration can serve, the difference is that between the attitude of an anarchist and a monarchist to the claims of a good King.

It is of importance here to add a brief survey of the important conceptions peculiar to the Christian view of Ethics:

(i) The Person of Christ occupies a unique place in the Christian system. In His own life He embodies and exemplifies His own teachings to an extent which few would dare to claim for any of the great philosophers. Certainly no other teacher has ever become to his followers what J. S. Mill (the Utilitarian philosopher) admitted as a "kind of personified conscience." The chief motive for right Christian living is love for the Person of Christ, in contrast with any abstract code of morals.

(ii) In virtue of our Lord's own imprimatur (*e.g.*, John xvi. 12-14) the New Testament writings have a place in the Christian scheme which are normative. (For the question of authenticity the reader is referred to books on Apologetics.)

(iii) There is a distinctive Christian "*Weltanschauung*" ("World View"). The Master has taught His followers that the universal laws of conduct are the requirements of sovereign Love, and that the highest good for man is to study them, and enthusiastically to obey Him Whose children they have become in Jesus Christ.

(iv) On the other hand, the Scriptures have not presented a complete scheme of Ethics with complete rules, all numbered and catalogued, any more than they have provided a ready-made doctrinal constitution.

Protestant Ethics (unfortunately, as has been stated above, Roman Catholic Ethics differs here) does not prescribe detailed instructions. It knows this to be the function of the Holy Spirit in the believer. But it encourages the Christian to apply himself with diligence to the study of the great principles and examples given by our Lord Jesus Christ, under the conviction that nothing can be right in a Christian "World View" which is not in harmony with both the law and spirit of Christ.

A further difficulty is occasioned in connection with the use of the word "law," as *e.g.* in "moral law," "the law of Christ," etc. Its use with a variety of meanings by different writers and often by the same writer (indeed, it is very difficult for any writer altogether to avoid such uses) has given rise to many misunderstandings and difficulties.

(i) To the legal profession, a law is a direct instruction, issued by some recognised authority, to certain classes of people to do, or not to do, certain more or less clearly defined actions, failure in either respect bringing a prescribed penalty.

(ii) To scientists, a law is "the statement of an observed uniformity."

(iii) To the traveller, the navigator, or the artisan, there are certain laws "of experience."

In the study of Christian Ethics the word "law" takes on a slightly new form. It is certainly not the "law" of observed uniformity (see (ii), above), and it is not altogether a law "of experience," although there are elements of this. It comes closest to class (i)—but yet has a distinct difference. The "ought" of Ethics is concerned with the inner urge experienced, or which should be experienced, by each man. The "ought" of jurisprudence is to a great extent imposed on a man from without (although human laws may be, and ideally are, based on ethical principles). Laws enacted by the State, however, may sometimes be unjust and unethical. A purely legalistic conception of the Old Testament ordinances does not, of course, differ from the view outlined above in class (i), except that the laws in this case are conceived of as imposed by an Authority Whose justice is unimpeachable and Whose power is irresistible. It is an interesting problem in tutelage whether this legal stage, so conceived, is a necessary step towards the higher sense of inner conformity to an ideal.

The New Testament, however, clearly indicates a new attitude to the law of God, which our Lord and St. Paul stated in opposition to the views of the contemporary legalists. Under the New Covenant, the law of God was declared to be written in the hearts of the people. The New Testament emphasis is upon this inner aspect of the law. From one point of view all men are subject to the law of God, and His law is the universal moral standard. We must not allow ourselves to frame varying codes and to create varying moral standards for men. However far short man may fall of the ideal, the ideal is alone the truly moral. The question of attainment raises great problems, but the alteration of the standard solves none. In the New Testament there is increasing emphasis upon the inner urge to comply with God's will, and the pleasure which the Christian finds in so doing. There is also the provision of special Divine aid in the application of the declared principles of the moral law to any given circumstances. The Christian recognises that man's highest good consists in being harmonised to the will of God, Who is the source of all good. In such harmony, man finds his true liberty. Hence, the word "law" loses the elements of severity, terror and bondage, with which the legalist has cloaked it. As Luther said in his famous treatise, *Of the Liberty of a Christian Man*, the Christian is "a free master over all things," in that he is in direct personal relations with the one Sovereign and free Lord.

The glory of the Christian's privileges and his claims concerning them are not, however, conceded by the non-Christian moralist. Further, certain Christian moralists have not sufficiently emphasised the radical distinction that the acceptance of Christian doctrine makes in relation to the ethical system. A very real difficulty arises here. A man who is an unbeliever fails to understand the Christian's conceptions of the "summum bonum," and he leaves out of account the agency of the Divine Spirit in its attainment. There is no true middle ground between the view that man is automatic, *i.e.* having no need of Revelation, and the view that he is theonomic, *i.e.* helpless apart from Divine intervention. Refusal to accept this position has led to the writing of many books which have not made the Reformed Faith the basis of their system. Christian Ethics is unpopular, and several generations of even theological students

have been trained chiefly in Natural Ethics, or have at the most been provided with an attempted synthesis of Hellenism and Christianity. Such a synthesis is neither desirable nor possible. There are, as we have seen, Christian elements in Hellenism, or, to speak more correctly, basic elements in man's moral nature which cannot be disregarded by Hellenism or Christianity. But at a time of crisis, when the whole basis and influence of Christian Ethics is being assailed by deadly systems which can do nothing but plunge mankind back into darkness and chaos, the Christian needs to be clear about his course of action, and his attitude to all substitutes for what God has given him. The need of the times is for a re-examination of the foundations, and for a new consideration of the implications and applications of Christian Ethics.

Above all else, in Ethics, as in Theology, the Christian Church must rectify its persistent relegation of the Divine Spirit to a negligible place in its thought. Dogmatic theologians and teachers in Ethics have tended in all ages to underestimate the functions of the third Person of the Trinity. The New Testament is quite clear as to the great importance of the Spirit of God in both branches of study. It is equally emphatic in its demonstration that a follower of Christ cannot separate his beliefs from his conduct, he cannot be content with a philosophical, but demands a theological Ethics. In other words, Christian Ethics is to be regarded as the study of the action of man *in its relation to the Divine action.*

CHAPTER III

DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

In finding our way in the field of Ethics, as in most other branches of human knowledge, it is important to possess some clear classifications, which will serve to differentiate the main tenets of the various schools of thought and their necessary accompaniments and implications.

But a caution is needed by those whose tendency is towards too rigid methods of division and towards over-systematisation. This is particularly necessary in a study which represents a branch of Philosophy. Few modern writers belong wholly to one school of Philosophy to the exclusion of elements derived from others. In fact, the schools of Philosophy themselves overlap. Many writers are intentionally, or unconsciously, eclectic. This fact is stated not necessarily to their discredit, although there is a great difference between an eclecticism which is the result of a convictionless mental hospitality, and the eclecticism which is a patient effort to secure a synthesis of the truths recognised as distributed in several of the types.

For the purposes of Ethics, the chief classifications required are those which reveal the relations of this subject with (i) the other branches of knowledge, (ii) the chief types of Philosophy, and (iii) (for Christian Ethics) the chief schools of Theology.

The Relation of Ethics to the other Sciences.

Before dealing with this relation it is necessary to indicate the groups into which the Sciences fall. They are usually classified on the basis of either (*a*) their content, or (*b*) their aims.

(*a*) The Sciences, when classified by their subject-matter, fall into four groups:

(i) *The Physical Sciences*, which deal with the problems of the physical universe—*e.g.*, Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, and Geology.

(ii) *The Biological Sciences*, which deal with the problems connected with the structure and reproductions of living

things (both vegetable and animal)—*e.g.*, Botany and Zoology.

(iii) *The Social Sciences*, which deal with the problems of human nature and social environments—*e.g.*, Psychology, Ethics, Economics, Politics and History.

(iv) *The Formal Sciences*, which are concerned with the thought processes and their expression which are common to all the Sciences—*e.g.*, Mathematics and Logic.

Under this classification, Ethics is to be grouped with the Social Sciences. It should particularly be noticed that Ethics has (or ought to have) a very real influence upon Economics and Politics.

(*b*) The Sciences may also be classified according to their aims:

(i) *The Descriptive Sciences* are chiefly concerned with accurately recording observations of the nature and relations of existing objects. The majority of the Sciences listed above belong to this group—*e.g.*, Chemistry, Physics, Botany, Geology. The emphasis is on facts which present themselves as external to the observer, the universe of the non-ego. (N.B.—This must not be taken as more than a tentative description.)

(ii) *The Normative Sciences* are chiefly concerned with the relative values of various objects and actions, and with the standards by which they are to be judged. The emphasis is on facts as they stand related to the judgments formed upon them. Logic, Ethics, Æsthetics, belong to this group.

(iii) *The Practical Sciences* are concerned with the application of the descriptive and normative sciences, to the securing of principles of action—*e.g.*, Architecture and Medicine.

In the case of Ethics, the emphasis under this classification is on the standard of values, which are, of course, appraised by the judgment.

We may now proceed to indicate briefly the relation of Ethics to the other Sciences. The following notes are intended to indicate a few of the important points at which Ethics influences them, or is itself influenced.

(i) *Philosophy*.—In view of the importance of the relation of Ethics to the various divisions of Philosophy, and the fact that ethical types tend to follow philosophical types, a fuller examination is necessary (see below).

(ii) *The Physical Sciences*.—These have only a very indirect relation to Ethics, since they are concerned with the en-

vironment within which man must pass his life, rather than with man's own conduct. During the time of their early development, it was thought that the Sciences of Biology and of Human Physiology were destined to modify the traditional views concerning man's place in the universe and of the factors which have produced his character. Now that sufficient time has elapsed to permit of the full efflorescence of these theories, there has been little, if any, modification of ethical theory from this source.

(iii) *Psychology*.—Here again, a place of exaggerated importance is frequently given to Psychology by some writers on Ethics. Whilst it is of importance as leading up to the study of Ethics—*e.g.*, by providing light upon the nature of the self and its consciousness—it has little bearing upon a man's behaviour in relation to his fellows, which is the chief sphere of Ethics. Its conclusions, however, are of basic importance as providing theories concerning the nature of the human personalities whose conduct is being reviewed.

(iv) *Logic and Æsthetics*.—Ethics has a much closer connection with other members of the normative group—*e.g.*, it has aptly been called " the Logic of human conduct," and it makes use of similar methods and thought processes. Similarly, since Æsthetics is concerned with the assessment of the value of works of art, and judgments concerning the sublime and beautiful, there is a sense in which Ethics may be considered as the Æsthetics of human conduct. The Greeks were aware of the close relation which exists between the Good and the Beautiful. (In Scripture there is frequent reference to such relation.) The modern tendency has been, however, to exclude ethical considerations from Æsthetics—consider, for example, the impatience of modern artists at any restrictions proposed on ethical grounds.

(v) *Politics and Economics*.—With these Sciences—the Social Sciences—Ethics has the most important connection of all. It is here that the moral standards assume their greatest importance—a man's conduct influences both the political and economic fields. The tragedy is that the connection is not better understood and more widely recognised than it is. Members of Parliament and of Parliamentary Committees have often had no training in the principles of Ethics, and may be disposed to undervalue or ignore the importance of the moral standard—yet they are responsible

for making decisions which affect the well-being of millions of men and often for long duration ! Whatever temporary success may appear to be achieved by opportunism and makeshift methods, it should be clear from history, if from nothing else, that no universally beneficent and enduring political or economic settlement can be attained which is in defiance of ethical principles.

A new scheme of history seeks to reverse the old relations between Ethics and Economics. It would make moral conduct wait upon economic order. It endeavours to explain social movements—*e.g.*, the emancipation of slaves —as dependent solely upon changing circumstances, and the assumed moral content in such movements as the result of imperfect reflection on the emergence of a new attitude to meet new conditions. There is a measure of truth in the view which should not be ignored. Conscience does not operate in a vacuum, and changing conditions very often stimulate conscience. But that is not to say that the moral and the expedient can be forthwith identified. An occasion is not a cause, though it frequently helps to explain a cause. Consciousness is always the reaction to external circumstances and interprets them, and cannot be interpreted by them. It is much too great a simplification of human experience to declare outright that " the bad " is identical with " the uneconomic." New social conditions create new moral conceptions in relation to them, but new moral conceptions create new social conditions. We cannot separate man from his environment, but neither can we make environment a sufficient explanation of the man. The urge to progress has in it always a moral element that finds clearer expression as the direction becomes more defined. The earnest call to remedy economic conditions is due to the fact that in certain particulars they are seen to be a barrier to moral development. This feature of consciousness remains wholly unexplained in the new theory of history.

The Relation of Ethics and Philosophy

Philosophy is specially concerned with the answers to the following questions, which also indicate the aims of the chief divisions of the subject:

(A) *Theoretical Philosophy.*

(i) What are to be considered the principles of valid reasoning?—*Logic.*

(ii) What are we to believe about reality?—*Metaphysics.*

(iii) What theory are we to accept in explanation of knowledge itself?—*Epistemology.*

(B) *Practical Philosophy.*

(i) What is the nature and what are the properties of the mind?—*Psychology.*

(ii) What is right and what is wrong conduct?—*Ethics.*

(iii) What are to be considered the canons of taste?—*Æsthetics.*

Within the various branches of Philosophy are various schools of thought, and Ethics is no exception. In fact, variations in ethical theory have been brought about far more definitely by the different schools in Metaphysics than vice versa. It is very important for the student to trace clearly to their ultimate conclusions the ethical implications of the various schools in Metaphysics. Fichte has argued that "the kind of Philosophy a man adopts depends on the kind of man he is," and many would assign temperament a large place in the process of selection. But it might with some reason be urged that a man is what his particular Philosophy has made him.

From the point of view of Ethics, the following chief types in Philosophy are of importance:

(i) *Naturalism.*—This type concludes that ultimate reality is to be explained in the terms which govern our investigation of the external world, on the lines of scientific research, as, for example:

(*a*) atoms of matter in motion—*Materialism*, or
(*b*) matter as a form of energy—*Energism*, or
(*c*) the ultimate result obtained by the sum of the causal series set up by the sciences—*Positivism.*

(ii) *Scepticism.*—It concludes that knowledge of the nature of reality is beyond the grasp of human intelligence, owing to the necessary limitations imposed on it. Its two chief forms are:

(*a*) Scientific Rationalism, and
(*b*) Agnosticism.

It is not easy to mark the precise dividing line between these. (*a*) may be said to emphasise the sum of positive attainment, (*b*) the consciousness of limitation.

(iii) *Pragmatism.*—This credits the human will with power to create truth for itself by means of definite action. This school is opposed to both forms of Scepticism—(*a*) the Rationalists being opposed by the " Experimentalists " and (*b*) the Agnostics by the " Voluntarists " (the latter being those who claim that the active self has the right optimistically to press forward towards the attainment of definite answers to the problems of Metaphysics. It is not contended that the answers must invariably be the same, but they offer satisfaction to the will and justify human endeavour to itself).

(iv) *Intuitionism.*—The term is rather unfortunate, like that of Naturalism above, since it covers more than one phase of philosophic thought, and is capable of more than one interpretation. In its narrow sense it emerged in the Scottish " common-sense " school, associated with the name of Reid. Its main contention is that behind the operations of the understanding are certain inalienable features of reason, which cannot be demonstrated but upon which all demonstration depends. The analytical processes of Naturalism depend for their validity upon the fact that such features are given as part of the inevitable heritage of our being. " Every analysis implies a previous synthesis." The synthesis is accomplished by means of those foundation factors in our intelligent being which are immediately perceived, and are not the subject of prolonged reflection. Some advocates of intuitionism tend to identify these fundamental postulates of reason with " feeling," and from this has arisen the popular conception of intuition which Americans call " a hunch." The more serious advocates are free from this looseness and appeal to foundations on the emergence of every difficulty. They would insist that intuitions are few and easily discernible.

(v) *Dualism.*—Strictly interpreted, Dualism asserts that there are two types of reality which cannot be resolved under any common denominator. In many ancient religions " Good " and " Evil " are regarded as hostile forces each equally eternal, so that existence is a blend of the two. There is a continuous conflict without any prospect of victory for either. In a less radical form Dualism declares

that, whatever may be the ultimate solution of the problem, experience presents two forms of reality—Matter and Mind —and these two must be accepted as disparate forms of being in the wide range of human knowledge. The relation between matter and mind has been presented in the forms of (*a*) Parallelism, (*b*) Interactionism, with various views as to the real ground out of which these forms emerge.

(vi) *Idealism.*—Idealism has taken several forms. Its main contention is that Nature as we perceive it is a " phenomenon " and must be interpreted in relation to an underlying " noumenon " which alone is real. *Subjective Idealism*, closely associated with the name of Berkeley, maintains that " matter " (which is, in Locke's phrase, " a something we know not what ") has no existence. What we call matter is really a product of percipient mind. " Things " are phases of human thought, and the being of any object consists in the fact that it is perceived in or by the mind. Apart from this perception there is no reality. Dr. Johnson represents a large company of " common sense " people when he imagined that he had refuted Berkeley by pounding on the floor with his stick. The real problem of Subjective Idealism resides in the difficulty of securing continuous existence for objects, if the premiss that perception equals " reality " is to be taken in its full literal value. *E.g.*, when I close my eyes do " visible things " vanish ? Berkeley, in his later writings, saw this difficulty, and sought to substitute " intelligence " for " percipience." This left room for a Divine understanding in which permanence might be found. *Kantian Idealism* contends that the world of experience is created by thought categories. The mind imposes on a given impression certain features which build up the world of " phenomena." Time and Space are intuitions, and have, as it were, a receptive capacity by means of which material can be apprehended from an unknown " Thing-in-itself " which thus apprehended is wrought up into " objects " by the operation of the " forms " of thought. These forms are common to all men because they are the property of " The Transcendental Ego "—*i.e.*, a universal Mind which exhibits itself in every individual. *Hegelian Idealism* sought to penetrate behind the categories such as " Cause " and " Effect," " Substance," etc., which Kant employed to build up the world of experience, and by means of a critical analysis to effect a union between

"The Transcendental Ego" and the originally given "Thing-in-itself." The process of thought is the only Reality. "Things" are "frozen thoughts," and the process is itself an eternal dialectic of the Idea, which passes out of itself into a world of experience, and returns again to itself, through all the stages of Being.

No simple explanation can do justice to Hegel, but he himself contended that he replaced substance by subject and a static conception by a dynamic one. It is the very nature of thought to differentiate itself and again reconcile its own differences, so that the world must present itself as an Eternal Process. The Absolute is not a simple Being remote from all lower manifestations, but an eternal movement from lower to higher, each phase containing its own dialectic by which a further stage is posited until we attain the concept of a Subject-Object, at once the cause of all things and the identity which unites them into a complete Whole. To the systems of Kant and Hegel, both of which regard the individual mind as a particular phase of Reality (and not Reality itself in its fulness), the term *Objective Idealism* has been applied.

(vii) *Realism.*—This has certain affinities with Dualism. It argues that Hegel's elaborate dialectic is not logical, and that he has not effected a real transition to the actual world of experience. In the form of a return to the Creationism of Aquinas, who argued that God called "matter" into being, Realism has had a remarkable revival in modern times. It aims at deliverance from so-called subjective impressions, and posits a real Object of which the knower becomes aware, and which has its own qualities more or less perfectly apprehended by the knowing subject. It denies, on the grounds above indicated, that Idealism is truly objective. On the other hand, it regards pure Naturalism as erring in refusing to grant real objectivity to the realm of thought, which has its own laws, and must be duly appraised as a constituent element in Reality. While it admits that there is a tendency in the human mind to unify its concepts, it insists on a careful examination of existing phenomena, which it is difficult to classify in any one system. It regards Idealism as in the nature of a hasty generalisation, and insists on the study of each group of phenomena as they naturally present themselves. The whole is far off, and can only be reached by a slow and

painful process, if at all. There is a subdivision of Idealism which goes under the name of Personal Realism. It would substitute for the Absolute a community of persons. In the relation of this community to an all-embracing Concept which unites without destroying personal independence, the Ultimate Truth is to be found. In this form the idea of a Personal God is preserved. Realism, in the ordinary sense, prefers the old-fashioned distinction into " persons " and " things."

(viii) *Mysticism.*—It has affinities with Intuitionism. It holds that the world of objects (apprehended by sense) and the world of thought have a vital connection, which is reached by a process of absorption. There is a venture of faith, a leap that bridges the gulf between sense and reason. Union with the infinite is the great ideal, and this union is achieved by withdrawal from the things of sense into the inner sanctuary of the soul. In modern life the mystic frequently displays affinities with the ancient Stoic, and regards sense forms as obtrusive hindrances to the rapt contemplation by which he becomes one with the centre of Being. The self is disciplined in the form of—

(*a*) *Asceticism*, in which desires, as being disturbers, are reduced to a minimum.

(*b*) *Intellectualism*, in which the ordinary affairs of life are disregarded for the purpose of a more complete contemplation. (In a moderate form this particular development is exceedingly popular. Such books as *In Tune with the Infinite* exhibit this phase of thought.)

(*c*) *Moralism*, in which certain higher values are offered as the key to the absorption into the One. Frequently there is a voluntary renunciation of position or wealth in order to attain this higher plane. Count Leo Tolstoi is a useful modern example of this form of Mysticism.

It now remains for the schools of Ethics to be examined in their relation to the various systems of Philosophy, some of which gave them birth. But, as we have pointed out above, there is need for caution in all such comparisons and classifications. Too rigid an allocation of a school of Ethics to any one philosophical division will rarely be found true to all its main views. Most generalisations (as Bishop

Stubbs used to remind his students of history) are "ipso facto" false, and their application must not be too emphatically made. Many modern writers cannot be said to belong solely to any one school. Their theories as to the ultimate standards can only be described as "mixed." The student, however, should not regard this "mixing" as necessarily a condemnation, because no school has a monopoly of truth. But, where possible, it is important to keep the main principles of each school as clearly as possible distinguished from its rivals.

The chief schools in the history of Ethics may be grouped as follows:

A. *Ancient.*—(Ethical thought before Christ.) The schools of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. The Hebrew system (preparatory to the Christian teaching).

B. *Christian.*—The Teaching of our Lord, supplemented by that of the Apostles.

C. *Mediæval.*—An admixture of the Christian and Greek systems, particularly that of Aristotle.

D. *Modern.*—Derived from, and corresponding more or less closely with, certain of the schools of philosophy outlined above (some of them are unconsciously influenced and modified in certain respects by Christianity).

Of these, only Groups A and B call for further comments at this stage.

Group A. Ethical Thought before Christ

The chief philosophical systems of the three ancient civilisations of classical times have anticipated the majority of the modern theories as to what is to be considered the ultimate ethical standard.

(i) The Hebrews laid stress on the *duty* of a man to be righteous.

(ii) The Romans were chiefly interested in obeying social law in so far as it led to *happiness.*

(iii) The Greeks proposed to themselves an ideal of *perfection.*

These three conceptions underlie many of the modern discussions concerning the ethical standard.

Group B. Christian Teaching

In a number of text-books of Ethics and some histories of Ethics, the distinctly Christian views have been omitted from the discussion. Reference to the indices will perhaps reveal occasional mentions of our Lord, or of St. Paul, and meagre appreciations of Christianity as a life system. The student must not assume, however, that our Lord and the Apostles added nothing to the Old Testament teaching of the Hebrew leaders and prophets, nor that they made no outstanding claims in the realm of Ethics. In fact, it is a misunderstanding or undervaluation of our Lord's unique teaching which has left the modern leaders of ethical studies (including some professing Christians) still groping in the twilight of Grecian philosophy.

" I am come that they might have *life*, and that they might have it more abundantly." The Christian claim is that life is the " summum bonum," albeit life which is of a special quality—viz., that which is found in Christ Himself. Its standard is the will of God revealed in Jesus Christ. When Bunyan's pilgrim perceived this, the appeal of all else fell into insignificance, " He put his fingers into his ears, and ran on crying ' Life, Life, Eternal Life !' " Many Christians have mistaken the significance of this eternal life—they think only of its implications for the future. A study of the Gospels—particularly that of St. John—should suffice to show the emphasis which our Lord placed upon it for the present experiences and conduct of mankind. " I am the Bread of Life . . . he that eateth Me, the same *shall live by Me*." It may well be that the very finality and exclusiveness of our Lord's claims compel those who are not disposed personally to admit them to accord to them scant treatment. Christian Ethics is not merely a section of Ethics in general, it is the conception of life which corresponds most fully with the Divine Revelation. Faith and morals are indivisible. (For a discussion of the distinctive Christian claims and modern theories see pages 150 *ff* and 85 *ff*.)

This introductory sketch may be concluded by (*a*) calling attention to certain presuppositions of Christian Ethics, and (*b*) briefly indicating the main phases in the history of Christian Ethics.

A. Presuppositions of Christian Ethics

The whole Christian conception of Ethics is closely linked with Christian Theology. The student may be tempted to separate them. The example of the Scriptures is against such separation. Christian doctrine is presented in both the Gospels and the Epistles in such a form as suggests immediate application to the everyday life of the Christian, and the practical instructions as to conduct are related to, and made dependent upon, the doctrinal instruction imparted in a previous section, or sometimes the same section (*e.g.*, see Rom. xii. 1 *et seq.*). The following basic Christian doctrines form the foundations of Christian Ethics:

(i) *The Christian conception of God*, particularly of His Personality, Sovereignty and Spiritual Perfection.

(ii) *The biblical doctrine of sin* (including that of "original" sin). It is specially to be noticed that a true view of Ethics is dependent upon a right understanding of the nature of human divergence from the will of God. The Bible declares that sin is self-will and is essentially a state of rebellion.

(iii) *The Christian doctrines* concerning the revelation in Christ and the redemption effected by Christ. The latter is much more to the point in Ethics generally than many philosophers will allow.

(iv) *The doctrine of Human Responsibility.* This teaching is clearly stated in Scripture, which treats it as the corollary of human freedom. The latter is as biblical (within its defined limits) as the doctrine of the Divine Sovereignty. The Divine Sovereignty is nowhere in Scripture so stated as to rid man of his obligation to obey God, nor of his guilt in the case of failure. (It will be necessary later to consider this last point in greater detail.)

B. An Outline of the History of Christian Ethics

(i) *The Early Church* had no systematic teaching on Ethics any more than a systematic Theology. But she early came into conflict with the heathen systems—a growing tension is already to be observed in the Pauline Epistles—*e.g.*, that to the Colossians—and the impact had the effect of forcing the Church to consider the basis and nature of its ethical instruction. Two traditions resulted: (*a*) Some, who clearly perceived that no compromise with the heathen systems

was possible, continued the Pauline tradition, and (*b*) others attempted various amalgams. These latter were mostly influenced by the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria (*e.g.*, Philo, Plotinus and Porphyrus), who sought to unite the views of Plato with the chief elements of the Hebrew and Christian traditions. Fundamentally, they represented Plato's view of the Absolute, identified as the God of the Christians, together with the view that the ultimate fulfilment of human aspirations was a mystic absorption into the Absolute (*cf.* modern theosophy).

(ii) *During the age of the Fathers* (about A.D. 100 to A.D. 500) there was a strong current of Greek philosophy in the Church, which (merged with doctrinal Semi-Pelagianism) has left its mark deeply on the Roman Catholic system of Ethics. These tendencies in the realm of Ethics were contested by Augustine of Hippo when challenging Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism (see a text-book of Systematic Theology). Although he had also absorbed certain Platonic ideas, Augustine based his whole system (philosophic and ethical) squarely on the Christian theology. Augustine championed the Pauline conception of the perfect love and perfect will of God, in harmony with which man alone achieves satisfaction and his fullest realisation.

(iii) *The Mediæval Schoolmen* (about A.D. 800-1400) were generally more concerned with the relation between speculative philosophy and theology than with Ethics. The two most widely known Schoolmen are Scotus Erigena of Ireland (ninth century) and Thomas Aquinas (thirteenth century). The former, following the Neo-Platonists, sought to establish his contention that the truest philosophy and the truest theology were essentially one. He was resisted by certain orthodox theologians, on the ground that his system ultimately led to pantheism. Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, took Aristotle as his master; whilst claiming that Reason and Revelation (rightly understood) were not in opposition, he kept them separate as being two distinctly different and yet both valid sources of knowledge. Thomas would claim that the knowledge of God is man's highest good, and that his rational powers should be applied to God as the Object of their search.

[It is worth noticing that Thomas has given rise to two schools of thought amongst Roman Catholic writers—those who may be called the *Aristotelian-Thomists*, emphasising

chiefly his philosophic principles, and *Augustinian-Thomists*, emphasising chiefly his orthodox theological principles. So far as Ethics is concerned, the former school would define the "summum bonum" as that which brings human nature to its highest state of perfection, whilst the latter approximates to the Augustinian definition. But Roman dogma has so far departed from both Augustine and this aspect of Thomas that only a very qualified statement concerning the necessity for the love of God is made—else the full Augustinian doctrine of man's total inability would be admitted.]

(iv) *The Reformation Leaders* (1500-1600) brought to the Church as great an ethical as doctrinal deliverance. This fact has not always been fully appreciated by Christian people. Another equally important point is that the great pioneers (Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli) differed little from each other in their ethical teaching. The supposed differences are mostly the products of their assistants and disciples. Those who are repelled by what they call the "legalism" of Calvin would do well to read the sections of his *Institutes* on the "Ten Commandments" and the "Moral Law" (Book II, chapters vii-ix), and on the "Life of a Christian Man" (Book III, chapters vi-x and xix). It would be interesting to know wherein he differs from the teaching of the New Testament. Those, too, who are so certain that Luther is "subjective" may, perhaps, care to explain to us how they reconcile their view with what Luther himself actually taught as to Predestination and the Effectual Call. As for Ethics itself, Luther gave in his book *On the Liberty of a Christian Man* the biblical view, the Magna Carta of the Christian, which had been lost to Europe during the period of the Roman Catholic ascendancy.

(v) *Modern Tendencies* in the Protestant Churches may be roughly classified according to the chief intellectual and religious movements which have gained widespread influence. On the Continent of Europe were: (*a*) the *Enlightenment* (in the eighteenth century)—a philosophical renaissance—which led to a reinstatement of "Natural" as opposed to "Christian" Ethics in the Churches; (*b*) *Pietism*, which, in emphasising the necessity for conversion, has tended to emphasise subjective experiences to the weakening of immediate moral effort. (*c*) *The New Protestantism* (at the close of the nineteenth century) rejected the doctrine

of man's total inability to achieve the will of God by his own unaided efforts, and, reducing our Lord to the position merely of the "ideal" of human perfection, based its system on man's "moral sense" or "conscience." There are various shades of opinion and subdivisions in this school, particularly where there is a greater natural tendency to lay stress on the ethical and practical as against the doctrinal. The sermons in many of the Churches have become almost entirely philosophical and ethical to the neglect of Christian Doctrine. (*d*) Towards the close of the nineteenth century a new *Biblical School* arose. Though small in extent and influence compared with most of the other schools, such traditions as that of the Keswick Convention (which has its counterpart in several other countries) represents the antithesis of the teaching of "the Enlightenment." Although less articulate through the lack of outstanding theologians who could enable them to gain the ear of the theological schools, these biblical traditions are not to be despised. They represent sincere efforts on the part of some members of the Church to draw direct from the Fountain. They were never more needed than today.

Let every Christian leave himself in no doubt that Christianity, as presented in the Holy Scriptures, is a complete life-system which has no need to borrow material to supplement its main features from any pagan source. Let him also yield to no one in his conviction that the essential solution of the great contradiction between man's struggle towards the ideal and its actual human attainment lies in the Christian teaching of Justification by faith and the work of the Divine Spirit. "He that followeth *Me* shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

SECTION A. SOME BASIC PROBLEMS

CHAPTER IV

THE MORAL "SELF"

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to proceed far in the examination of the nature and value of human action, nor to discuss the nature of man's highest good, without reference to "self." As soon as inquiry is made as to what "self" really is, we are at once drawn into considerations which belong mainly to the province of Psychology, which sets out to examine the nature of the mind, etc. For the purposes of Ethics, attention is chiefly directed to the origin and nature of moral judgments.

The following is offered as a bare introduction to one of the profoundest mysteries of man's nature. For a full discussion reference must be made to text-books of Philosophy and Psychology. The subject will be approached (*a*) by a sketch of the "stages" in the growth of moral consciousness (*e.g.*, as seen in childhood), (*b*) by general conclusions, (*c*) Notes on certain views which have been advanced by philosophers.

A. STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

It is necessary here to interject a warning that has been too frequently ignored. There is a tendency in studying the phenomena of early child-life or of the life of primitive peoples to read into external evidences something of our own more developed internal experiences. The child cannot be questioned at an early stage, and we are dependent on inference for the interpretation of its actions. When the child or the primitive man can be questioned, often too little attention is paid to the power of suggestion resident in a dominant personality, and to the further possibility that our questions may be imperfectly understood. There is a natural tendency on the part of the less-instructed to acquiesce in the findings or suggestions of a superior intelligence, or an intelligence which seems to be superior. This

fact presents a subtle snare for anthropologists. When we are told, *e.g.*, that a child of two solemnly presented a biscuit to its foot, we have no means of judging what would have been the child's reaction if the foot took it. As Max Müller playfully pointed out, no one would be more surprised than a child who kicked a chair, if the chair suddenly kicked back. Yet large inferences on " primitive animistic " tendencies have been built on evidence of this character. It is a salutary exercise to criticise our deductions and exclude by every means the possibility of error. At the same time, child-life offers itself for examination and should be studied.

(i) At a very early stage, possibly before the period of birth, the child distinguishes itself from its surroundings. It moves and meets resistance. The not-self displays the character of an external something with which the individual has relations. Sentiency appears at the dawn of conscious life, and belongs to the animal creation generally, as well as to man. It is not long before the somewhat anomalous position of the child's body arrests its attention. It is the medium of its experiences, and yet can be controlled in certain ways. The child gets curious about its fingers and toes. It watches this movement. Notwithstanding much that has been written to the contrary, observation seems to indicate that at least the normal child has a wholesome tenderness for its own body. It hurts itself sometimes, but only inadvertently. It never bangs its foot on a hard surface with the resolute vehemence it displays when in possession of a spoon. Gradually the idea of a close connection and yet not a complete identity between the " self " and the " body " emerges in consciousness. This difference is fostered by the growing capacity for asking questions and pursuing independent research with reference to objects ready to hand. The body readily presents itself as an object, and is so far akin to the not-self.

(ii) At the same time as this development of consciousness regarding the body and objects lying around, there is awakened an awareness of other beings. Perhaps the first form in which these present themselves is in a sense of dependence. The child seeks its mother and expects a supply of its needs from that source. But dependence is rapidly qualified by a sense of independence. Expectations are sometimes unrealised. Persons obtrude themselves as

controlling agents. Customs are imposed and obedience enforced. The child is fed not when it wants to be fed according to its inner desire, but at a regular time imposed by another person. The child is washed whether it wants to be washed or not. The regular imposition of stated performances creates habits. The child first acquiesces and afterwards adopts this method of behaviour as its own apparently free choice, forgetting the preliminary training and it may be its previous resistance, and here also a primitive "law" is dimly recognised. The attempt to violate certain habits leads to unpleasant consequences. The idea of an outside authority is born in the child's mind.

(iii) As a consequence of these new conceptions, all interacting within consciousness, there emerges the idea of "purpose" and the formation and repetition of purposeful acts. Natural impulses seek satisfaction. These in turn are controlled or partly controlled and directed by imposed custom. Custom long practised loses largely the appearance of external control and comes to be homologated with choice.

(iv) Actions produce different results. Some actions are merely necessary and, as it were, are completed, so far as results are concerned, in their performance—*e.g.*, the feeling of satisfaction after meals persists for some time. Other actions produce results in relation to the child's environment, including the attitude of other people towards him. Some results of actions are so desirable that the desire is awakened to secure more and more of these results. Such desires may give rise to self-assertion (an attitude which is not confined to childhood).

(v) The varieties of actions and the nature of their results create a system of values, and the conviction grows that there are wise and unwise actions. Out of this comes the pursuit of investigations into the nature of things and a desire to seek truth for its own sake. (This is a late development and, it must be added regretfully, appears in a very rudimentary form in many adults.)

(vi) Adolescence plays such a large part in modern text-books on conduct that it would be disrespectful not to notice it. Undue attention has sometimes been focussed upon the sex element in adolescence, to the obscuring of the fact that the latter really forms the transition to maturity for all powers of body and mind. Quite an interesting study has been lately introduced which tends to show that climate,

customs and education play a large part in determining the commencement and duration of adolescence. So far as research has gone it tends to show that early cohabitation is an important factor, and that, broadly speaking, adolescence occurs somewhat later and is of longer duration in the case of highly civilised peoples. It has been pointed out, *e.g.*, that child marriages in India have done much to hasten the advent of adolescence. Climate plays a large part, but by no means the whole, in determining the period, as comparisons with different races which possess different customs and under much the same climatic conditions establish.

Adolescence marks the final period of physical growth, and ends with the full maturity of the body. It also marks the period when mental growth attains a large measure of fixity. Habits, customs, obediences, pass in review before the inner censor of the mind. Reflection and self-analysis become greatly strengthened. The consciousness of purposeful action present and operative for a long time is now greatly increased. Actions are related to the inner "Self." Things are not done "because we are told," but "because we want," to do them. Self-determination gains power, and a sense of "freedom" manifests itself. The new convictions often take bizarre forms, and parents speak of the child as "going through the troublesome period." It is well that the transition to "freedom" is somewhat slow. The new self-assertion is often tempered with pathetic dependence. The fledgling tries its wings indeed, but is loth to leave the nest.

(vii) At last, the transition period is over. Before that takes place the adolescent is already ushered into conditions that provide new customs and sanctions, and demand vital decisions. Life becomes more directly personal. The individual must abandon largely the habit of dependence and make decisions for himself, and bear the consequences which follow from his decisions. He must reckon with the claims of other individuals who seek to determine their lives as he does his, and neither he nor they can hinder interaction, which greatly qualifies the new-found independence. It may be said that at this stage the old consciousness of dependence derives a new and special character. It is no longer a sense that he must rely wholly on others. It becomes a sense that he can determine him-

self only in relation to others. There are " rights " which belong to him, and which he can justly demand. But there are " rights " which belong to others, which he must equitably concede. " No man liveth unto himself," instead of being a moral platitude, is suddenly manifested as the condition of a developing personality.

(viii) Finally, when there is failure to secure a social harmony there is a sense of inner disquietude. There is something more than fear of the opposition of others, or dread of consequences in this sense of inner discord. The individual comes to realise that there is a moral power which is greater than his will, and often superior to his ability. Matthew Arnold called it " a stream or tendency, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." Others have called it " the course of Nature," or " the cosmic mind." Christians speak of God.

Thus two elements conspire to form the consciousness of the " Self": (*a*) A sense of freedom, purpose and self-determination. " Our wills are ours, we know not how." (*b*) An awareness of customs not our own which we have assimilated, an awareness of other persons with claims that demand recognition; an awareness of a cosmic force or Being. These recognitions constitute limitations on individual self-determination, which is only true to its fullest expression when it takes them up into its decisions and adjusts itself to their presence and operations. " Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

B. General Conclusions

Briefly, the elements which go to make up the moral self may be summarised as:

(i) " The centre of reference." The lower animals may have this to a limited extent, but, so far as we can tell, while imitation cannot be wholly excluded, their major responses are hereditary, and in the nature of reflex changes. Man, however, can (within certain physical limits) modify his responses at will.

(ii) " The power of reflection." Man, unlike the lower animals, is able to refer his actions to himself and to carry out an elaborate process of self-examination. In the case of the lower animals " they are at least led by certain material

impulses to the accomplishment of ends of which they are unaware " (MacKenzie).

(iii) The sum of his habitual responses to his environment and the rigour or laxity of the process of self-examination give the clue to what may be called his " character." From what is known of his character, others form their estimate of the man. From what others say to him, or about him, the man himself tends to modify, to some extent, his own self-assessment.

" Self " could therefore be defined as the continuity of consciousness developed in an individual by response to the environment in which he finds himself to be living. It is the character of the person described because it reveals the habitual motives from which he acts. The element of responsibility which is hinted at in the adjective " moral " as applied to " self " is dependent upon the extent to which the responses of the individual can be modified to satisfy a man's own fullest needs and those of others with whom he finds himself in relation. As MacKenzie puts it, " Man lives within the universe of his character."

C. Views advanced by Philosophers

(i) The Cynics' definition of " self " separated it from its social relations, whereas the Stoics chiefly emphasised its social implications. These two opposite tendencies have reappeared again and again throughout history.

(ii) Aristotle suggests that there are two selves—the rational self and the irrational self. The good man obeys his reason and pursues good deeds, the bad man gives himself up to his irrational self, pursuing fleshly pleasures, luxury, etc.

(iii) The Intuitionists also made a division, but it is based upon men's powers of introspection. Man has two selves in the sense that a part of the consciousness is reserved as if it were an " umpire " sitting in judgment on what the rest of the being is doing. After the completion of any given act, this impartial spectator can be called in to act as an umpire. This umpire, which may be called the " moral sense," has the duty of guiding its possessor in the course of right action. The majority of those who put forward this view also indicate that this " moral sense "

only retains its vitality by constant interaction with the judgment of other persons.

Of all psychological problems, "self" remains the most difficult for discussion and definition. Man can do little more than accept what is a matter of common experience—viz., that he is capable of reflecting upon the nature of his own actions. One further point is worthy of attention, however, and that is that there is a kind of permanency and pervasiveness connected with the "moral self." A man's personal desires after the highest good have something very much in common with those of his fellows, and fundamentally this human solidarity has an element which refuses to be limited by time.

CHAPTER V

ARE DESIRE, WILL, MOTIVE AND INTENTION TO BE DIFFERENTIATED?

MODERN PSYCHOLOGY HAS tended to abandon the various classifications into which it was once fashionable to place the various faculties, and to treat the human mind as a unit. In the case of each of the various forms of reaction which are possible to a man on any given occasion, he is conceived of as thinking, or as displaying, emotion *with the whole of his personality*. The deeper science goes into the nature either of the physical universe or of man, the more the older analytical conceptions are found to give way to a process of synthesis, necessitated by the growing appreciation of the underlying unity of the world. But, granting that analysis may have been overdone, is there no place for the more general and obvious distinctions concerning the varying reactions of which man is capable? It is certainly found to be convenient in ordinary conversation to make certain distinctions, whether or not they are valid and of real importance in Ethics.

Desire and will, motive and intention are so closely related as to seem at times identical, yet the preservation of certain distinctions are useful because of their particular suggestiveness, especially when considering certain special problems of Ethics.

(i) *Desire* may be defined as a person's awareness that the achievement of a certain end is necessary for the completion of his sense of well-being. It is distinguished from mere appetite by conjoining to any such impulse which might arise the additional reflection that the satisfaction of an appetite is an end which it is wise to secure. Desires are, therefore, not independent of the point of view which the individual occupies. It is because of this that desires may conflict with each other. An immediate satisfaction may not appear worthy of the individual in certain circumstances. James finds the conflict between "reason" and "instinct" in the multiplication of desires, and the con-

sequent inhibition of one desire by another. "Reason may . . . make an inference which will excite the imagination so as to let loose the impulse the other way." "The animal richest in reason never seems the fatal automaton which a merely instinctive animal must be." It should also be observed that the end is always defined as a "good," and this is true even in the case of those who desire ends which to their friends may appear bad (*e.g.*, yet more alcoholic drink will appear a "good" to the habitual drunkard).

Any given desire belongs essentially to the particular universe which is constituted by the possessor's own peculiar set of reactions to his environment. His desires, as distinct from mere appetites, are the outcome of his character. It is possible for him to recognise two universes—*e.g.*, a religious universe on Sunday, and a very mundane one during the week. It is less easy for him to maintain two corresponding sets of desires because, *e.g.*, whatever pose a profiteer may adopt when endeavouring to worship God on Sunday, his heart will the while be set on Mammon.

In everyday life there are often situations in which a "conflict of desires" is set up by an individual's circumstances, involving him in active relation to the affairs of more than one universe. His own interests may incline him to action in one direction, his desire to serve the interests of a dependent member of his family in another, and his desire to be a good citizen in yet a third. Some philosophers have suggested that the man will emerge from his dilemma by following his strongest *desire*. But, as has been suggested above, desires do not exist "in vacuo," but belong to a set of conditions which constitutes a given universe. The final issue will depend primarily on the man's *character*, and the final course of action will be determined by which particular universe is for the moment dominant and therefore identified with the man's "good."

The consideration of such a conflict is of a very special interest to the Christian, because the exclusive and all-pervading claims of Christianity frequently place him in such positions of conflict. It is important for him to see that it is not so much a conflict of isolated desires as a conflict between one or more "universes." This is taught in the plainest of terms by our Lord and the New Testament writers. The conflict is one of, *e.g.*, a life-system of which

God is the Centre and Controller, and a system of which self is the centre, or between a Christian life-system and the world-system. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him!"

Some writers suggest that the term "wish" should be reserved for a desire which has become so predominant in a man's consciousness as to dispose the mind towards the first active steps to fulfilment. Hence the one is conceived as latent, and the other as passing into another category which may be termed "effective." But a desire which is effective is not far short of a motion of the will. Hence it seems best to emphasise the more essential distinction between desire and will.

(ii) *The Will* may be defined as the process of the transference of a desire (and often the universe to which it belongs) as near as is possible, or practicable, to the realm of dynamic action. The will begins to clothe the abstract with the concrete. The act represents the completion of this process. The will mobilises the whole personality in readiness for the act or succession of acts which will achieve the object of the desires. Such a transference may be (*a*) completed in the space of seconds, (*b*) delayed and spread over a course of years, or (*c*) remain uncompleted.

From the Christian point of view, it is to be noticed that the New Testament indicates that it is here that the battle rages most fiercely for the follower or would-be follower of Christ. Many appear to have desires after Christ and the life of righteousness—but the desires, for various reasons, do not undergo the transformation into will and action. The Bible teaching on these points does not admit of divergent views. Unregenerate man is regarded as given up to desires which are ego-centric. He is circumscribed by this limited universe. It is one of the chief functions of the Spirit of God to introduce him to the universe in which God is the Centre, to give him new desires and to supply the dynamic for the transformation of those desires into the sphere of the will and to acts of obedience to God.

It is a matter of history that fanatics and narrow-minded bigots appear to have (and often have) more will-power than cultured men, who have had a liberal education. This is because they are usually influenced with but a single desire and single universe—to use the common

phrase, they are men of " one idea " (or have " single-track " minds). Free from conflicts of desires, they are able to devote all their thought-energy to the pursuit of their one idea. This does not mean, however, that a person of wider sympathies and greater intellectual capacity cannot also be strong-willed. He achieves the latter, however, by an ability—which can be cultivated—of concentrating on the most important of the universes in which he has concern, and also upon the most important elements within it. The Christian should be a man of wide sympathies, and yet strong-willed in the essential affairs of everyday life.

(iii) The differentiation of *motive* from *intention* is worth careful study in a text-book of Ethics—*e.g.*, Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*. Since very much loose thinking and talking (as, *e.g.*, in discussions amongst Christians) takes place around the questions raised by the use, or often the wrong use, of these words, the following suggestions are made in the hope that they will be carefully followed up in some text-book. Let the reader think carefully through the sentiments he may have concerning the culpability of one of the crimes reported recently in his daily newspaper, or concerning the merit of an act of philanthropy. He will soon find himself (almost automatically) examining the " motive." There are cases where conditions leading to a certain crime seem sufficient to evoke true sympathy, and almost to be sufficient justification for the offence. There are also found to be two ways of doing kind acts—some men have found the secret of doing " kind things kindly," others have not. There are numerous other variations.

What really accounts for the different values which the observers place upon various deeds ? It consists in what is called the " motive."

Motive may be defined as that which induces us to act in some special manner. Here we must notice that there are two ways in which a man may be brought to action: (*a*) by the stirring of his emotions, and (*b*) by the thinking which concentrates on the goal to be reached, and mobilises the rest of his being in its pursuit. In the first case, a man is more or less " *driven* " to his action—*e.g.*, he may in sudden anger seize a hard object and throw it violently at a fellow-man. In the second case, he is " *induced* " to act by concentrating his attention on the end to be achieved —*e.g.*, he may desire a political opponent to be stopped

from swaying a political meeting, and, while the latter is speaking, throw a stone at him " in cold blood." In the second case, our tendency is to assign a greater degree of guilt; while, if the man in the first case is known to have had attacks of epilepsy in his youth, there is a disposition to make allowance for him.

Here is an important distinction. Acts performed under the stress of emotion can scarcely be called " acts " in the ethical sense. They are almost involuntary (they may sometimes actually be classified as involuntary). Compare the acts of a man under the influence of drink, or those of a madman. These latter are not held " responsible " for their actions. On the other hand, when a sane and sober man performs an action he is induced to it by some thought *of an end to be achieved—e.g.*, he may desire to give someone pleasure, or to advance the well-being of a given class of society.

It may be argued that the emotions are often evoked prior to and in the performance of many of these acts. This is true and is often desirable—*e.g.*, the stirring of the affections, or of his patriotism, may lead a man to acts of benevolence. But the relation of the emotions to the motive is rather that of a " catalyst." They dispose him to commence to act and they facilitate the carrying out of his ultimate object.

(iv) *Intention* is something other than motive, and is often replaced by the word " purpose " (by some authors, however, " purpose " is used with a meaning differing from intention—the former being applied to the thought-processes leading up to the latter). It may be defined as the definite result which we aim to bring about by some action or series of actions. The result may be simple or complex. Hence intentions may be classified according as they are immediate or remote, direct or indirect. Sometimes an intention may be partially unconscious (in the sense that a man may not have grasped the full meaning of what is actually his intention, and would probably give an account of it which would differ quite considerably from actuality). The intention is what becomes the *object* of volition, in contrast to the " motive," which is what moves the will towards that object. The first is the actual goal itself, and the second that which induces the man to move towards the goal. The relation between the two is, of

course, very close. The motive will always to some extent be comprised in the intention.

Finally, brief reference must be made to the discussions which have raged around the question of how far pleasure is concerned in the question of motive, and also as to the place of reason. Some philosophers, *e.g.* (the Hedonists and Utilitarians), have maintained that either the pursuit of pleasure or the avoidance of pain will ultimately be discovered as the basis of all motive. The word " pleasure " must be understood here in the restricted sense of the comfortable feeling which accompanies the attainment of our wants. The claims of the Utilitarians must be criticised on two grounds: (*a*) It is a matter of fact that most of us have met people who have concentrated upon ideals the pursuit of which they know would bring them anything but immediate, and possibly not remote, pleasure (at least in this life). A man's desires therefore can, as a matter of experience, be fixed upon objective ends other than those which can be called pleasurable. (*b*) It is an important fact that the more a person consciously aims at pleasure (for its own self) the less he is likely to obtain of it. The greatest pleasure for a human being is often to be found when self is forgotten and the whole consciousness is captivated by a brilliant performance in music or in sport, etc.

Similarly, in the case of pain, which may be regarded as the extreme opposite of pleasure, it is not true to many circumstances of life to assert that if we were not seeking pleasure, we were seeking to avoid pain. For most schoolboys, the study of mathematics or the classic languages is certainly not the pursuit of pleasure, even if it may sometimes be the avoidance of pain ! But it may be neither for some of their elders who are usually free to please themselves at school-leaving age. Such study may be deliberately chosen as useful for a desired end.

What is the relationship between reason and motive? Those writers who have just been noticed above would mostly deny it a place and would make it subservient to the emotions. Others in escaping this error tend to go to the opposite extreme and make reason the only factor in motive. The truth surely must be that if our desires and motives form part of a rational universe, then the reason must have a large part in their control. But since it is possible for a man to know all about a good end, and yet not to pursue

it, reason is not to be held to be synonymous with motive. Also, some philosophers have not been slow to point out that some motives would seem almost irrational. Hence we conclude that whilst any given motive may possess, and often does possess, all of the above-named elements—pursuit of pleasure, avoidance of pain, and response to reason—it is essentially dependent upon the kind of universe from which it arises. Our reaction to the world around is determined by the extent to which we feel we can make it harmonise with our thought-system. Hence, where we see some particular in which we can produce such conformity, we are provided with a motive for action.

CHAPTER VI

THE MEANING OF CHARACTER AND CONDUCT

So far as the discussion has at present proceeded, we have been concerned with analysis rather than synthesis. It is now necessary to notice how the foregoing considerations may be applied to a man as a whole. The habitual tendencies of a man's desires, will, motive and intention indicate the kind of universe in which his life is being conducted. For general purposes, this universe may be represented by any of the words "self," "personality," or "character." The latter is the more usual in this connection, and may be defined as the universe which is made up of a series of volitional acts of the nature which is peculiar to a given man. In the use of the word "character" emphasis is particularly placed on the motives which habitually influence him, whereas the use of "self" or "person" would refer more particularly to the continuity in the individual's consciousness.

Probably the question of character is one of the most important in the whole study of Psychology's relation to Ethics, for a man's will is ultimately an expression of his real character. Some philosophers have laid stress upon the importance of habit in the formation and conservation of character, and habit does exercise a great influence, but we must remember that habitual acts may equally be taken as the expression and outcome of the character. The Scriptures teach us that the nature of a tree is indicated by its fruit. Pruning and training certainly may assist its growth—but do not in themselves give rise to its particular fruit. "Do men gather grapes of figs?" This is one of the deepest lessons taught us by the Scriptures, and one which we are too slow to learn.

Whilst the nature of the universe within which a man's habitual activity is displayed is known as his "character," the course of the activity itself is termed his "conduct." The word "conduct" may be used of all human activity, but is more properly applied to the various actions which

are deliberately willed and directed to a particular end—*e.g.*, the violence of a patient in a state of delirium is not to be accounted conduct, but the struggles of the same person when in a normal state of mind, when directed against the efforts of a nurse to pursue her ordinary duty, may be assessed as wrong conduct.

The following further considerations are important for a fuller understanding of the meaning of character and conduct.

A. Their Relation to the Circumstances

(i) It has sometimes been claimed that a man's character is to be held as almost synonymous with his circumstances. This, however, is demonstrably false—*e.g.*, compare the fact that avarice is often found amongst both rich and poor, and, similarly, that generosity is displayed by others in both social circles.

(ii) The geographical conditions (*e.g.*, nature of the countryside or of the climate) may certainly influence the temperament (*e.g.*, the difference between a hill tribe and one on the plains), but it is by no means the whole explanation of the vicissitudes of character found amongst men.

(iii) In spite of change in external circumstances a man's character often remains essentially unchanged. (*Cf.* the familiar illustrations from predatory animals—*e.g.*, the same sunset which causes the antelope to seek its hiding-place is the factor which encourages the lion or tiger to stir abroad in pursuit of its prey.) Again, in the case of a young man falling into bad company there will be deterioration of character, because there is a change other than of external circumstances. But even here, to a great extent, the nature of his essential character will remain the determining factor in his reactions.

B. The Place of Habit

(i) Socrates taught that right conduct depended upon the possession of right knowledge, whereas Aristotle claimed that the essential factor was the acquisition of good habits. In neither case, however, is there a complete explanation. Against the former there is the fact that the possession of the fullest possible knowledge does not always lead a man to perform the right action, whereas in the case of the latter

we need right thinking before attempts can be made to embark upon good habits.

(ii) The truth seems to be that (*a*) there must be something of a special nature (in the form of "character") before a start can be made in right thinking. (*b*) Habit to a large extent results from right thinking at the beginning, and then gradually becomes a part of the character, reinforcing it. (*c*) When good habits have once been formed the right conduct is undertaken almost spontaneously.

[Note the importance of these considerations in connection with the Scripture teaching concerning true righteousness of life: (*a*) "New Birth" is a *sine qua non*; (*b*) the Holy Spirit turns our thoughts in the direction of the new good habits; (*c*) these should eventually become natural to us, and (without conscious effort) spontaneously displayed.]

C. The Development of Conduct

(i) Much has been written concerning the growth of conduct—*e.g.*, the younger animals in a herd imitate what they see in the older. Similarly, tribal customs are adopted by a new generation and made more elaborate. There have been those who have traced the development of conduct from early origins amongst primitive man, through the stage of self-examination to that in which moral ideas and moral laws began to be formulated. It is clear that with the advance of civilisation the question of right conduct becomes more complex—but the line of thought indicated may, too, be overdone. It leaves out of account all reference to a *divinely given* original pattern and standard for conduct.

(ii) The element of imitation by the younger animals of the elder in the herd is not, however, without its truth and importance for our present study. It is fatally easy for us to take our standards from those around us, to make our view of the life of some older Christian man of our acquaintance the ideal of the Christian life, instead of the New Testament standard of the life of Christ. "We comparing ourselves with ourselves are not wise."

(There should be added here: D. *The Question of Human Freedom*, without which, of course, the question of right conduct is meaningless. This is discussed on pages 135 *ff.*)

CHAPTER VII

THE MORAL JUDGMENT

WE ARE ALL familiar with the fact that men pass judgments on each other which are both unspoken and, more frequently, spoken. They belong to the class of judgments which are known as "value judgments" (*i.e.*, they are not concerned with describing objects, but with assessing their value). When this process of assessing is concerned with the worth of a man's actions it is known as a moral judgment. (N.B.—The judgment passed on the goodness or badness of a natural object or phenomenon is also included in this class, but for the purposes of the present volume we are concerned with a special aspect of human life.) An "ethical" judgment is one which is concerned with the persons, or person, performing certain actions and with their intentions. It may be also passed on the actions themselves. In describing these three matters, certain sets of adjectives are usually retained for special use—*e.g.*, (i) the persons performing the actions are said to be "virtuous," "righteous," "upright" (or "vicious," "unrighteous," "corrupt"); (ii) their intentions are "good" (or "bad"); (iii) the actions themselves are "right," "fair," "lawful" (or "wrong," "unfair," "unlawful"). Before proceeding, we need to ask ourselves a series of questions concerning the moral judgment—*e.g.*, (*a*) What is its origin? (*b*) What is its nature? (*c*) How is it applied?

A. The Origin of the Moral Judgment

The student is referred to text-books for discussions of what is called "the growth of the moral judgment." That there has been a growth (at least in complexity) is at once apparent by comparing the notions of "right" and "wrong" displayed by a member of an uncivilised tribe with the dilemmas of a scrupulously honest man actively engaged in a large modern city! This idea of growth, however, needs to be kept within its due limits, and particular attention paid to the place of Christianity in developing and

giving a new " inwardness " to the value judgments. Also, if we accept the biblical account of Creation, we must not thrust aside the fact that the Creator supplied man with the abilities necessary for the conduct of his life, though, of course, these are open to development.

It is usual, in text-books of Ethics, to describe stages of development such as the following. (N.B.—This method of approach is based on the prevailing evolutionary views and methods of teaching.)

(i) Man's consciousness was at first absorbed with the whole tribal system of which he found himself part (what is termed the " tribal self " formed the bounds of his universe).

(ii) Next, he engaged in self-examination in that he assessed the rightness or wrongness of his acts according to the tribal customs and in the name of the tribe.

(iii) In the next stage, he began to discover that he had an individual " conscience " and an individual view, which did not always harmonise with the practice of the tribe.

(iv) When a law-system replaced custom in the tribe, the man often found himself in two minds concerning certain actions. In such inner conflicts, his self-reflection and self-judgment led him to the passing of moral judgments not only on his own acts, but also on those of others.

(v) The next and final stage is the unification of these various judgments into a series of principles, or a system, of universal application.

B. The Nature of the Moral Judgment

(i) It is not a judgment " about " a fact, as in a branch of natural science or one of the formal sciences, it is a judgment " on " some object or action. It involves the idea of a comparison with some standard. It is not possible to say that anything is " good " or " bad " unless there is some " rule " or " norm " by which it can be tested.

(ii) The problem of its exact nature can be approached objectively or subjectively. In the first case, the object of the judgment is the rightfulness or wrongfulness of the direction of the will in any voluntary act. Secondly, the question is raised as to who is qualified to pass the judgment, and by what right it may be passed (*i.e.*, answering the question: From what point of view is the judgment made?).

(iii) In connection with the first of these two problems, there are two considerations: (*a*) It has been pointed out by the philosopher Kant that there can be no right direction of human action without a " good will "—in fact Kant goes further and claims that " there is nothing in the world, or even out of it, that can be called good without qualification, except a good will." Hence what makes an action right or wrong is not the goodness of the result, but the goodness of the intention. It is in the latter that the chief interest centres. (*b*) But, in the last analysis, the judgment is not so much on the motive or intention, but on the character of the man whose act is being judged. It is not so much on " the thing done," but on " the person doing."

(iv) The scope of this work precludes full reference to the theories which have been constructed concerning the point of view from which the moral judgment is passed. Something of the difficulty of the problem will be felt by the reader if he reflects upon an argument in which he has participated as to the excellence, or otherwise, of a musical performance, or of a painting. By what right did he criticise it? Has he the right unless he is a skilled musician or artist, or has the ordinary member of the public a similar right? Which is to be accepted as the final arbiter, the expert musician or artist, or the average member of the audience or a group of spectators? The most important of the replies given to these questions, as related to Ethics, are: (*a*) That when judgment is passed on the action there should be some kinship or sympathetic link with the universe within which the action took place—*e.g.*, a person who has no ear for music could scarcely be considered to be the best judge for an Eisteddfod! Similarly, the man who condemns the wrong which has been inflicted on another tends to place himself in the same position as the other and to imagine the wrong as done to himself. (*b*) When the judgment is passed concerning the man's own action, there is an appeal from what has been called the " man within " to the " man without." The latter acts as a kind of " impartial spectator." (*c*) But this " impartial spectator " seems to be an ideal or " higher self " to which an appeal is made. (*d*) This " higher self " corresponds or tends to correspond with what is conceived as the average member of the community. For the term " higher self " " conscience " may be sub-

stituted when a man's own actions are concerned; when the moral judgment is passed on the actions of the individual, he regards it from the point of view of what he accepts as the moral standard (a question which is bound up with this discussion).

C. Its Application

Of the practical application of these principles of judgment, the following must be noticed:

(i) When there may be two possible courses of action which are both relatively good, it is not sufficient to adopt the more usual as that which is finally correct. The right action is that which leads to the best result that can possibly be attained in the circumstances.

(ii) Similarly, there is often a difference—and such a difference may be of great importance—between the course of action which the most certainly produces the best end, and the course which the person concerned is convinced will lead to the same result. The first is *objectively* right, the second is *subjectively* right. The two courses of action may be divergent in their results. This is the tragedy of many lives in relation to the Gospel. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS CONSCIENCE?

THE WORD "CONSCIENCE," like so many other words in Theology and Ethics, has been used with different meanings. As a consequence it requires careful examination.

There are problems connected with its origin and development. But the principal interest for the moralist resides in the essential nature of conscience. This latter, however, cannot be separated from questions of origin and development.

Some writers regard conscience as an expression of human reason. Thus Kant treats it under the heading "practical reason," as distinct from man's search after truth, which he calls "pure reason."

Other writers regard it rather as an expression of the emotions, and from that school we get the definition of religion as "Morality touched with emotion." Still others insist that conscience is a peculiar supernatural gift, "the voice of God" in man.

In relation to the manner in which conscience is viewed such questions arise as to whether conscience is the final arbiter in matters of conduct, or whether there does not lie an appeal beyond it, to the Bible, or to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Both philosophers and theologians are divided on this point. If there should be an appeal to any arbiter other than conscience, then there is at least the possibility of conflict. Sometimes the conflict is expressed, not quite happily, as one between conscience and authority, with that careless definition of terms which is such a marked feature of much modern writing. Obviously conscience is an authority, and so, on the theory considered, is the Bible. The possibility of conflict lies between two authorities operating along different, though not dissimilar lines.

The student is earnestly advised to avoid short cuts in all such discussions, and to cultivate a habit of accurate thinking, however difficult may be the attainment of the ideal.

Difficulties have been increased because certain defined schools have arisen with views which are not easily reconciled. The following examples serve to make this clear:

(i) Some have described conscience as an innate faculty, which possesses the power of concluding what is right or wrong without reference to any external source or any attention to an historical or environmental background. This is perhaps the popular view with those who assure us that they cannot find it in their conscience to do this or that. Conscience is presented as a kind of stamping machine which places an unalterable and irreversible brand on actions. If the brand is satisfactory, the individual is absolved from any further inquiry into the essential righteousness of an act.

(ii) Others have sought to pass beyond the apparent consequences of following a purely individual test (which might make an action right for A which happened to be wrong for B), by linking this inner decision to the Supreme Good, making conscience an infallible guide constantly witnessing to the truth of God. Differences in conscience would thus become either different directions of the will of God, because of the different circumstances of individuals, or different phases of development in an approximation to the Divine will. This perhaps underlies the very popular defence of certain actions in the phrase " Of course, it may be all right *for them* !"

(iii) The modern school of " evolutionary " Ethics, in the hands of many writers like Herbert Spencer, has so far reduced conscience to a form of corresponding development related to the material and physical processes observed (or thought to be observed) in the universe, that conscience has become a marker indicating a particular stage of advance rather than an arbiter passing judgment on conduct. " Behaviourism " is the most extreme form of this ethical theory that has yet emerged. It is not easy to do justice to any particular line of thought, such as to one of the above examples, in a few sentences or paragraphs, but the possibilities of serious cleavage between the various schools are sufficiently indicated.

The following considerations may prove of help in deciding between conflicting theories.

A. Conscience in its Historical Setting

(i) The earliest traces of the idea in classical writings is in the form of reference to Nemesis. The Greek chorus explains to us the trend of events, and indicates the working out of an inevitable law of retribution in human affairs. It assumes the consent of the hearers to the judgment that it shall be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked, but tends to relate the process to a higher influence than the conscious response of the individual. In modern phraseology conscience tends to become "objective." There is, however, in the reported speeches of Socrates, as Plato presents them, clear reference to what he calls his "dæmon." In all great crises Socrates is represented as consoling himself with the consciousness that this inner arbiter has witnessed to him as to the propriety of the course which he adopts. He is distressed if this inner voice is at any time silent.

The Stoics developed Socrates' idea on lines which approximate to the Scriptural representation. "The wise man" was arbiter of his destiny and had a supreme confidence in his own actions which he governed by the rule of right reason.

(ii) In the Old Testament, the conscience is one of the outstanding subjects in several books—*e.g.*, Job and Psalms. It has here a distinctly marked individual character, presenting a contrast to the Greek Nemesis. At the very beginning of the Old Testament story, there is one of the most pointed references of all—God, seeking fallen man, asks, "Where art thou?" and the man is ashamed.

(iii) Turning to the New Testament, we find that a considerable amount of our Lord's teaching was concerned with the conscience of His hearers: "Why even of your own selves judge ye not the thing which is right?" St. Paul clearly teaches (*e.g.*, in the opening chapters of Romans) (*a*) that each man has the power of discerning between good and evil, (*b*) that God held mankind to be morally responsible, because sufficient light has been given him throughout the vicissitudes of history to enable him to choose aright.

(iv) In the writings of many philosophers, and especially of those who have been influenced by Christian teaching

—*e.g.*, Kant—conscience assumes great importance, and becomes definitely legislative.

B. The Nature of Conscience

(i) The chief difficulty in considering the nature of conscience arises from the remnants of the old "faculty" school of philosophy which still remains with us. The older philosophers of the seventeenth century tended strongly to allocate conscience to a "department" of a man's personality. This was an inheritance from some of their mediæval predecessors. The necessity for isolating the forms of expression of the human personality for the purposes of close study tends to perpetuate this "faculty" view, and to awaken useless contentions as to the relation, *e.g.*, between understanding and will, feeling and reason.

It is wise to regard conscience (*a*) as synonymous with *the personality as a whole*, and to view it as the reaction of a given personality to a contemplated or completed action. (*b*) Conscience is *related to the emotions* (*e.g.*, there may be pleasure or a sense of inner harmony when conscience is at ease, a sense of pain or inner discord when conscience is stimulated). (*c*) Conscience is certainly *a rational judgment*, and relates directly to an act of will. This is the justification for Kant's terminology—"the practical reason."

We must not allow ourselves to isolate "reason" as one aspect of the human personality and "will" as another. There is a limited use of the word "reason" which identifies it with ratiocination and lays emphasis on the processes of thought, but there is a wider and deeper use of the word, which includes in it all the activities of a rational being. In that sense, reason is not one phase of personality, but on the contrary, personality is the centralisation of reason in a particular consciousness, constituted of three elements, cognition, feeling and will. Much discussion regarding the freedom of the will is vitiated by not observing this fact of the unity of personality.

(ii) The views which have been expressed concerning the nature of conscience may be divided into two groups, The Naturist and The Evolutionist.

The Naturist view is frequently favoured by "Theists" and is also held to some extent by "Intuitionists." One of the difficulties here is that such divisions are not logical.

A Theist may be also an Intuitionist, and many Evolutionists would earnestly urge that they are Theists, and that, in fact, they alone have a logical conception of Theism! But a certain justification for the division is found in the fact that definite Theism gives a particular colour to the discussion, whatever view of conscience may be held, modifying the conclusions of other representatives of the various schools.

The Naturist view is that conscience is a definite and separate natural property of mankind which has existed as long as man himself—*e.g.*, on this view the question "Adam, where art thou?" presupposes that a response from conscience was immediately evoked. Man, *as man*, discerned right from wrong. The chief difficulties urged against this view are: (i) History shows that the "conscience" of individuals and of whole nations has varied from century to century. We do not hesitate to condemn certain views which were almost universal in previous ages (*e.g.*, the possession of slaves, or the practice of polygamy). There has been development. (ii) There is, so far as we know, no separate cerebral organ, or separate division in the psychic processes, which can be labelled "conscience."

The Evolutionist view regards the conscience, in common with all human organs and functions, as being the result of a gradual growth (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Herbert Spencer's derivation of the human maternal reactions from the efforts of the lapwing to divert strangers from its nest, and Green's criticism of it). There are equally serious difficulties in this view—*e.g.*: (1) Sometimes individuals and even certain communities have been in advance of their neighbours, who have had much the same environment, and their views have shocked or irritated the other members of their generation. (ii) No matter to what limits we are able to press back our inquiries (and this is the substance of Green's criticism to which reference has already been made), we never succeed in getting in man a sensation unrelated to a central "self" and to something of the spiritual world of which man partakes. The consciousness of an end, as distinct from, and governing, an impulse to action, is essential to the definition of consciousness, and is creative of the spiritual world in which man partakes. If this consciousness is present, then we have a "conscience." If this consciousness be absent, we have no knowledge of, or

means of estimating, the development of a "spiritual" potentiality from a condition where that spiritual power did not exist.

But while it must be conceded that these difficulties are fundamental, and must modify the evolutionary view of conscience, it cannot be denied that there has been development at least within the range of man's relation to the external world, and to his neighbours, and, the Theist would add, within the range of man's relations to God. It is important to consider, therefore, whether any harmony may be effected between the Naturist and Evolutionist theories of conscience.

C. Functioning of Conscience

The main interest of our inquiry at this stage centres in the functioning of conscience. The following are, briefly, the chief points for consideration:

(i) The New Testament teaching may be said to contain the best elements in both the above views.

It insists that man is responsible to hear the voice of the inner arbiter. It also insists that the conscience is capable of development, and can become more sensitive. (Here we note that the contrary is also clearly developed—conscience is capable of a measure of atrophy.)

The conscience of the individual is related to that of the community in which he lives. Attention to this fact exerts a corrective influence on what otherwise would lead to intense individualism. But the New Testament carries us beyond the community, and presents as an ideal a conscience "void of offence toward God" (this is regarded as its primary function, and one to be kept inviolate) and "towards man." In this insistence on the alternatives open to the conscience—that of improvement, or that of weakening and perversion—we see the indication of the true function of conscience. It is God-given in a particular sense. It acts as an "indicator" revealing whether an action is or is not in proper relation to the right. In the case of a Christian, just because he is possessed of a knowledge of the Divine will, and has a spirit of submission to the claims of God, it is (or should be) more delicately poised than in the case of a non-Christian.

(ii) When we come to consider the question of the develop-

ment of conscience, it is well to bear in mind that conscience does not function as it were in " a vacuum," but must, from the nature of the case, be closely related to the experience, motives and spiritual outlook of the individual. It is a mistake to regard it as a kind of *absolute* like a correct time-piece, exerting the same influence under the same conditions, on different individuals. (A striking corrective to this popular but mistaken view is found in Archdeacon Julius Hare's *Vindication of Luther.*) Amongst the influences affecting the conscience are the following:

(*a*) The sanctions imposed by Society, determining certain lines of action and restraining lawlessness by punishment. It is this feature which has led to the proverb " Reason is the parent of law."

(*b*) The example of others, the great men of the past, or some of those living, and, a very important element, the discipline of education.

(*c*) The individual's own desire for inner harmony partly occasioned by the operation of these forces—*e.g.*, a desire for the satisfaction that he has done his duty.

(*d*) The influence of ideals, whether those that belong to the national spirit, or those that have been chosen personally.

(*e*) In the case of the Christian, the supreme example of Christ's life, and the challenge which that life makes to the conscience.

(*f*) Again, in the case of the Christian, there should be a growing desire to be aligned to the will of God, and a corresponding sensitiveness of the conscience.

It will be seen on examination that if the idea of a Divine Revelation be included under (*a*) The sanctions imposed by Society, then (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*) are resultant from external principles received into the mind, which direct the individual along a course of action which is itself determined finally by his reactions to these influences. This is what appears to be meant by the phrase " Morality is only possible in Society." At this stage, while the individual conscience is actively exercised, individualism in any form that would lead to solipsism (*i.e.*, the theory that the individual alone exists) entirely disappears.

D. Is Conscience a Permanent Element?

The question arises, Is conscience a stage in the moral development which becomes superfluous once the true moral standard is attained? In other words, can conscience be outgrown? This view finds a measure of support in the Greek idea that morality is ultimately an inner harmony producing happiness. On the other hand, many are inclined to hold that conscience should more and more invade every department of life, and that the nearer an individual comes to perfection, the more delicately sensitive does conscience become.

Here, again, there is an element of truth in both views. A continuous internal discord produces what has been called "a bad conscience," and an attitude of self-complacency checks higher endeavour. The Christian as he draws near to God earnestly desires a closer union still, and becomes aware of sins and hindrances hitherto unsuspected. But the moment of recognition and confession is also the moment of deliverance through the power of the Holy Spirit. Harmony is not a static condition secured once and for all, but a continual yielding to gracious influences which secure progress and produce peace of soul. In this way the Christian can and should know a conscience which is normally at rest. The combination of the two ideas of pardon and power in relation to a Living Person achieves what would otherwise be unattainable.

Conscience must not be regarded as a negative element but as positive. It is not only a censor of evil but an apprehender of good. As the reaction of the personality to given conditions it has objective validity. It brings the individual into contact with a controlling influence which is higher than "self." It is "God's most intimate presence in the soul." Here is the point at which some solution of the antinomy created by a conflict of authorities may be resolved. Rigorist philosophers have appealed to the conscience as "the categorical imperative" investing it with legislative authority. Theologians have appealed to the Bible (or the Church) as an authority that determines conscience. John Knox declared to Mary Queen of Scots that conscience was of little value unless it were properly instructed! Even those who would be disposed to reject

the "instruction" tendered by the doughty Reformer cannot but feel that he gave utterance to a truth.

But what if the relation between conscience and instruction be reciprocal? The difficulty, which is often acute, lies in putting conscience on the one side and Society or the Church or the Bible on the other. The conscience, however, really witnesses to Him Who is higher than "self." It is the recognition of the Divine demand. But the recognition is met by a corresponding revelation. God addresses Himself to man. Conscience hears His voice and seeks to relate His demands to the actual circumstances of the moment. The measure of authority is regulated by the measure of apprehension. Always there is "the categorical imperative," the demand to conform to an objective standard, which has been also subjectively realised. But always there is the possibility of clearer apprehension as the voice of God becomes distinguished in its moral imperatives from custom, conventions and man's unaided struggle after the best. God may be to some men a very vague concept, in certain circumstances nothing more than the recognition of an immediate "ought." This is the best available to the individual in such circumstances, and if he acts against his conscience, violating his sense of "right," he acts wrongly. Thus it is said somewhat paradoxically, "If you follow your conscience you may not be right, but if you do not follow it you are certainly wrong." But to the man to whom the revelation of God has come in clearness, and who recognises His Sovereignty, conscience bears witness to the law of God. Day by day, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, there is an indication given of the application of God's will in the serious duties and responsibilities of life.

SECTION B. NATURAL ETHICS

CHAPTER IX

A REVIEW OF SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

THOSE WHO HAVE followed the previous discussion will recognise that Ethics is an essential element in our rational constitution. Man accuses or else excuses himself at every stage in his development. It is not surprising, therefore, that reflection has addressed itself to this phase of his being, quite apart from the unique revelation contained in the Old and New Testament. The philosophic treatment of Ethics, particularly by the Greeks, enables the student to understand more clearly the teaching of revelation. There are many points where the ancients "groping after God, if haply they might find Him," have come very close to the facts of revelation, and where the gospel of the grace of God fills in the rough outline and completes the picture.

It is, further, a mistake to isolate even New Testament teaching from those other conditions which have had their part in creating our complex modern life, of which the influence of classical thought is no inconsiderable factor. Much can be gained from a study of the approach to this science from the classical side, and of the problems thereby presented. In undertaking a brief review of various philosophical ethical systems, we divide the examination into three sections: (*a*) Ethical teaching before Christ. (*b*) The period between the early Church Fathers and the beginning of modern Philosophy. (*c*) Modern philosophic schools of Ethics.

A. ETHICAL TEACHING BEFORE CHRIST

The following notes are intended to call attention only to leading points in ethical teaching (for a proper treatment the student should consult a history of Ethics).

The treatment of what may be called, for convenience, "individual" Ethics may be said to have commenced with the Sophists, the early professional teachers of Philosophy

in Greece. Of these the best known is *Protagoras*. Their chief contributions to Ethics were (*a*) the separation of Ethics, and its treatment as a particular branch of Philosophy; (*b*) their emphasis on the individual; and (*c*) their demonstration that the good at which society aims is personal, and not some abstract ideal. As might be expected from the new concept of the importance of the individual, the Sophists adopted a highly subjective type of teaching. (Here, as elsewhere in this book, the word "subjective" is used in its modern sense of that which belongs to the individual's apprehension. Coleridge seems to have introduced this mode of speech into England, and it has become altogether universal in English writers.) They devised the apophthegm "Man is the measure of all things," and taught that the development of thought within the mind of the individual was the ultimate test of reality, or at least was ultimate so far as human knowledge carried us. Man's business was to satisfy himself, and he had only himself to satisfy. The result was that truth disappeared. A man had only to change his mind, and he changed facts. There was no standard of comparison. The problem of the relation of the individual to a wider whole became thus acute.

Socrates

We have two accounts of Socrates which are very different, yet strictly complementary. Xenophon is usually credited with giving the nearest portraiture of the man as he actually was. Plato, his disciple, has expanded and idealised his teaching. Socrates was impressed with the difficulty created by the Sophists, "Man is the measure of all things." This is true. But what man? Socrates conceived "The wise man." From this emerges one of his well-known dicta, "Virtue is knowledge." He taught that a true understanding of the nature of actions which were desirable would in itself be sufficient to result in the practice of virtue. Virtue was one, indivisible and teachable. Thus, in opposition to the individualistic, disruptive tendencies of the Sophists, he claimed that there was a universal standard and science of good conduct, which "the wise man" by patient endeavour was enabled to apprehend. Socrates' influence was due mainly to his personal influence on his immediate disciples. He did not produce a system

of Ethics. But he blazed a new trail particularly by emphasising the necessity of a criticism of the individual's thought. "Man, know thyself" was a command that dispelled the light-hearted acceptance of every passing whim of thought as an adequate explanation of the universe. From it there rose the twin conceptions of self-examination and the necessity for right motive as the source of right action. The difficulty as well as the duty of acquiring sound knowledge became apparent by his application of the Socratic "irony," a method of close analysis which took nothing for granted, but passed from concept to concept in search of the ultimate foundation of truth. The method is seen in an attractive form in Plato's *Republic*.

Plato

Plato is the elaborator and systematiser of Socrates' theory of Ethics. He discusses not only personal but also social well-being and the connection between the two. In confuting the individualism of the Sophists, he developed the view of a fixed moral end bound up in the nature of things.

He led the way in pursuing truth for its own sake, and showed that a knowledge of ultimate realities was an essential part of well-being, and not merely a stepping-stone to it.

Attention needs to be directed to his theory of ideas, which lies at the base of all his teaching. According to Plato, ultimate reality consists in "ideas" or "types." These ideas realise themselves in the physical world, but are hindered in their expression by a resisting medium called by him "Matter." Of course "the Matter" of Plato must not be identified with "the matter" of physical science. It is simply a negative resisting feature that hinders the full development of "the idea." The highest idea is that of the "absolute good." This "absolute good" is realised in the State, and the virtue of each individual is an element that constitutes the "good." Each member of the State contributing his appropriate quota to the unity of the whole is the highest expression of "the idea" possible in this sphere.

From this arises Plato's view of "justice." The State is the fullest expression of the unity which belongs to virtue. Thus he seeks to realise the dictum of Socrates that "Virtue

is one." The State achieves this unity by adjusting the lives of numbers of individuals to each other. In realising this adjustment the cardinal virtues, wisdom, courage and temperance, are developed. The uniting bond which binds all the three into an ordered whole is Justice. Justice is the application of true wisdom to the whole life of society. Hence the necessity of careful education in every section of society, and especially in the rulers. When philosophers are kings, or kings are philosophers, the Ideal State will emerge.

Plato, in discussing "the good" and "pleasure," declines to effect a complete identification. But at the same time he regards pleasure as a direct result of the good. Well-being is a proper combination of the exercise of reason and the experience of pleasure or satisfaction which such exercise should bring. There must be a suitable field for the exercise of reason, and this is provided in the well-ordered State. There is thus a recognition of the influence of external conditions on the happiness of the individual. At times the language of Plato suggests the idea of a personal God. But the chief result of his Philosophy is to set before his followers "the idea," which is a perfect combination of truth, beauty and goodness. Man's true end is to achieve the knowledge of the idea which involves the suppression of his vices. Happiness or well-being, for example, cannot be found in the elevation of individual desires as an end of conduct.

Aristotle

Much discussion has arisen concerning the respective merits of Plato and Aristotle. Some contend that Plato is the master mind, and Aristotle a copyist with a bad grace, who sought to climb on the reputation of his predecessor by depreciating his contribution to Philosophy, while employing it himself. Others insist that Aristotle gave coherence to the Platonic system, and is alone worthy of regard. It is certain that there is a large measure of agreement between them. Like Plato, Aristotle lays particular stress upon the social character of Ethics. He treats it as a branch of Politics. It may be said that the strictly individual conception of moral duty is a result of later conceptions. Aristotle introduces the idea of development in

relation to "the idea," and may justly be called an Evolutionist. Aristotle enters more closely into definition than Plato. He seeks to explain well-being and virtue. He describes the forces that are struggling for the mastery over man, and is careful to postulate that Ethics is not an exact science. Circumstances enter largely into the consideration of right conduct, which is "a mean" between two extremes. Virtues are not natural endowments. They are the result of discipline—a continual choice of the good which becomes habitual. There are intellectual and moral virtues. The former are the result of education, the latter of habit. (It is noteworthy that benevolence as such does not figure in Aristotle's scheme of virtues. Also, Butler in modern times draws largely on Aristotle, but in this particular reveals the passage from the social to the individual conception of right conduct.)

"Theoria," or a life given up to the contemplation of truth, is the highest ideal. It requires a certain measure of leisure and external comfort. To this extent Aristotle is a Realist, in the practical sense of that many-sided word. Aristotle's idea of a slow ascent from "formless matter" to "matterless form" causes him to express less confidence than Plato in man's capacity to achieve the highest form of well-being. The discussion of various types of virtuous action has made Aristotle almost indispensable even to the modern student. Both for Plato and Aristotle, "happiness" or "well-being" is much more of an ordered harmony than an experience of pleasure in our modern use of the word. While neither of them, and more particularly Aristotle, altogether despised the effect of what they call "external goods"—*i.e.*, those social and physical conditions that are incidental to the expression of man's nature—they were more emphatic on the inner response of the soul or mind. The possession of, or the lack of, material advantages was to them largely, though not wholly, a matter of indifference. Yet it must be confessed that neither Plato nor Aristotle completely overcame the natural dualism that displayed itself in the ever-present conflict between reason and pleasure.

It is not surprising, therefore, that later Greek Philosophy developed schools that were distinguished by the emphasis placed on one or other of these ideas. Many contend that the later schools were one-sided developments of the master

minds, and would exhort us to return to what they regard as the complex concepts of the great leaders Plato and Aristotle. It is certainly worth noticing that superior geniuses generally enlist disciples of lesser calibre, who attach themselves to one side of their master's teaching to the exclusion of the other and the impairing of the whole. Hume is a greater mind than his followers of the Cousin, or even the Mill, type. Kant has a wider vision than the theologian Ritschl, and many prefer to follow Hegel rather than the pronouncements of Schelling. But the later schools are there, however they may be appraised, and it is important to study their presentations.

The two great divisions in Greek thought are the *Epicurean* and the *Stoic*. They divide on the important question as to the proper attainment of happiness or well-being. They are at one in the notion that inner harmony is the desirable end. How is that inner harmony to be attained? The Epicureans recognised that the satisfaction of the various urges apparent in experience was bound up with the attainment of the end. But the emotional urge is very evident and very dominant, and they directed attention towards it. Much has been written about "The Epicurean Sty," and it is true that lesser lights in that particular school of philosophy tended to encourage moral laxity, while the populace mouthed their phrases as an excuse for licence. But the Epicureans proper were not insensible to the pitfall which lay in the path of the indulgence of a ceaseless round of pleasure. They urged the wise man to cultivate an attitude of indifference to the solicitations of nature. True pleasure resulted from a careful discipline of the life, and had an element of permanency. The discipline secured an attitude of undisturbedness, so that the fierce heat of passion no longer influenced the soul. The Epicureans have been classed as "Egoistic Hedonists" because their main tenet is that the attainment of pleasure is the supreme end of life. But it would be a mistake to divorce their teaching from the main stream of Greek thought, which found the end of moral conduct in a disciplined community. The Epicurean valued the moral virtues as the means of securing that permanent pleasure which rose superior to the continual unrest of emotional urges. But they made self-complacency, and hence a form of feeling, the ruling factor in their ethical system. They did not realise sufficiently

that feeling, even in the modified forms which their more cautious philosophers gave it, lacks the element of true universality. Hence the whole theory is exposed to the double criticism that it offers no simple criterion of happiness or well-being, but only a few useful maxims for attaining it, and that it cannot be proved that the best men of the race pursue only pleasure or accept it as the final standard by which conduct ought to be evaluated. Socrates, drinking the hemlock, provided a problem for the Epicureans.

The *Stoics*, prominent amongst whom are Zeno (the founder of the school), Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, had some very remarkable resemblances to the Epicureans, though many of their distinctive views were in contradistinction to them. They recognised quite as clearly as the Epicureans that passion was a disturbing element, and that true harmony could not be reached by yielding to it. They sought to attain this end by advocating the repression of this disturbing feature.

(i) Reason was to take control. The "wise man" was indifferent to the appeals of passion. He would choose, if he could, that which was pleasurable, but he would not be unduly influenced in his choice by any emotion. Just as a man would leave a smoky room rather than subject himself to the inconvenience of inhaling a smoke-laden atmosphere, so the wise man would remove himself from life if life ceased to hold out hopes of, at least, complacency.

(ii) Virtue was not altogether to be identified with knowledge, as Plato and Aristotle had argued, but virtue, the true condition of Well-being, was attained by means of knowledge.

(iii) The world around us is the outward manifestation of the Eternal Spirit, and bears the same relation to it as the body to the soul in man. Hence the secret of true happiness is unity with the various forces of nature—apprehension of the purpose, and resignation to the demands of, the living Being which is the animating principle of the whole. (Arising from this remarkable ideal, we have the conception of the world as the Son of God. This feature of Stoicism made a powerful appeal to the early Greek Fathers, and finds its counterpart in the mystical, somewhat pantheistic, elements in many of the mediæval theologians.)

The results of the Stoic philosophy so far as Ethics is concerned might be summarised as follows:

(i) Well-being consists in rational action according to fixed universal laws in accordance with the limitations of human reason and freedom. (The modern theories of being "in tune with the Infinite" find an ancient parallel here.)

(ii) Virtue (which is not pleasure or even an undisturbed equanimity) is the guiding principle, and virtue is synonymous with right reason. Reason sets the standard of conduct.

(iii) Since the laws of Nature are unchanging and unchangeable, the highest form of virtue consists in submission to these laws and processes. It is the province of reason to recognise, interpret and follow these laws. (The Stoic dictum "follow Nature" must be interpreted in the light of this principle, which is fundamental to their theory.)

(iv) Pain and suffering are to be overcome by the cultivation of an attitude of indifference to them.

It cannot escape notice that in each of the above theories there is really a struggle with the irrational. Ethics is, in other words, the resolution of a conflict, and leaves untouched the question as to why there should be conflict. A more direct criticism of the Stoic system is that it postulates a result which is chiefly negative—*i.e.*, indifference to feeling. While laying great stress upon reason, the Stoics were relying upon the discipline of the will for the suppression of feeling, and the self-denying pursuit of their pantheistic harmony with nature. The relation between reason and will is not clearly defined. Plato and Aristotle would have contended in opposition that the rational life is composed of feeling, intellect and will, harmonised in true well-being. Thus it may be said, reverting to an earlier treatment in this chapter, that the Stoics raised in their own way some of the problems of the later "faculty" philosophers. But the Stoics exercised a profound influence on Greek and early Christian thought, hence it may be well to glance at the *beneficial* influence exercised by them.

(i) They set their faces against extreme Hedonism. If pleasure conflicted with right reason, pleasure had to go. They emphasised that pleasure is not the only motive force in life, and more particularly such pleasure as terminated in individual satisfaction. The Epicureans would admit the

latter statement, but their system offered no clear way of escape from it.

(ii) They emphasised very strongly the idea of "Duty." Conformity to unchanging law was something higher than any sectional interest of the individual.

(iii) In theory, and to some little extent in practice, the Stoics overcame the limitation of racial boundaries. They had no real place in their system, limited as it was to the "Anima Mundi" or the doctrine of an all-pervasive Eternal Spirit, for feelings of racial superiority. Stoicism had elements of strength that made it suitable as a philosophy for periods of crisis.

B. The Period from the Early Church Fathers to the Beginnings of Modern Philosophy

Space forbids more than the barest outline, but the student is urged to trace in a history of Ethics, and in the appropriate sections of a treatise on Dogmatic Theology, the influence of the various elements in Greek thought on the Christian leaders of the first few centuries. W. G. T. Shedd in his two volumes on *The History of Christian Theology* has written attractively and suggestively on this point. He distinguishes the Platonic and Aristotelian developments, and offers an excellent introduction to the study recommended. Dean Inge has written on Neo-Platonism.

It is possible to isolate for notice three main groups: (i) The Neo-Platonists, (ii) The Patristic Writers, and (iii) The Mediæval Schoolmen.

(i) *Neo-Platonism*, which deserves close study for itself, is represented by Philo, Plotinus and Porphyry. It attempts to blend Old and New Testament elements with the views of Plato in a special type of Mysticism. It identifies Plato's view of The Absolute One—the union of truth, beauty and goodness into the completely perfect Idea—with the God either of the Old, or of the Old and New Testaments. It offers as the goal of all true well-being the absorption of human reason into a mystical union with the Absolute One. Neo-Platonism is important because the allegorising school of Scripture interpretation frequently inclined to these ideas, and exercised a very great influence on Christian thought for centuries. The "True Gnostic" of Clement of Alexandria illustrates some of the Neo-Platonic conceptions.

Dean Inge contends that Neo-Platonism was not without its share in influencing the later English Platonists—Cudworth and Clarke. Plotinus is most important from this aspect.

(ii) *The Patristic Writings*, *e.g.* those of Augustine, are more definitely founded upon New Testament Theology, but bear strong marks of the influence of Plato. It must be remembered that Augustine before his conversion was a teacher of Rhetoric, and imbibed the learning of the existing schools. Augustine makes a distinctive claim for Christian Theology and relates it to Ethics. He held very strongly to the Personality of God, and claimed that the sovereign love of God—that is, to avoid confusion be it said, God's love to man, and man's awakened response to that love—is the chief good. In serving the requirements of that love mankind attains its highest development, and finds emotional as well as more purely rational satisfaction. Here we touch a point which illustrates very ably the superiority of the Christian ethical conception. It lifts the Supreme Good entirely beyond the adventitious. So long as men are developing their own inner life and seeking internal harmony, the problem of the Sophist may be said to continue. Who is "the wise man"? If it be granted that we can escape the anarchy of sheer individualism in the solipsistic form by finding, as Plato and Aristotle found, a higher synthesis in the life of the community, can communal justice, as conceived by the Greeks, lead us to a perfectly rounded Justice? The tacit assumption behind the findings of Aristotle, that conditions in a well-ordered Greek State represented the last word in the ethical aim, had something to do with the disruption into the later schools. "The wise man" of the Stoics sometimes clothed himself again with an individual character, as when he is pictured as withdrawing himself from an unworthy world as a person would leave a smoky room. "Follow Nature" was a good maxim in the sense in which the Stoic understood it, but it had to be countered by the painful reflection that most men did not so interpret the world in which they lived. The Stoics in this way created an aristocracy in the realm of conduct, and too readily adopted the pharisaic cynicism, "This people that know not the law are cursed."

But in the newer Ethics we reach a universe that is in

many respects independent of the changing notions of man. God reveals Himself as eternal love, and man, rightly constituted (we are not here discussing the related problems of sin and the Fall), reaches upwards in filial response. There is a transcript of eternal law untouched by the limitations with which our flesh is cumbered. It is at least a sublime conception, and too little attention has been paid to it even by professed exponents of the ethical content of the Christian revelation. Augustine's dictum, which has become so familiar, "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee," introduced a far-reaching principle in the study with which we are concerned. For it must be supplemented by his strong conviction of "the call of God." Man reaches out in a restless quest after truth, beauty and goodness. At times he glimpses the fair country of his dreams afar off. The vision is his, but how to attain it lies beyond his powers. Must he ever see it afar off? As he advances in knowledge, and realises more fully his individuality in the wider personality of established moral conduct which has in it universal elements, must he be content to abide with what he has thus attained, while his horizon still stretches beyond his utmost limit? Must the advance stand halted before various forms of communal life, each competing with the other, and each vainly claiming to be the whole? Must the issue be then in a pragmatic attitude that makes the best of any given situation and largely creates its own moral content, attaching itself to others in a loose federation in which a few common conceptions form the connecting links?

These, or questions like these, seem to arise when the ancient philosophers have reached their highest point. They have frequently been asked in our modern world. Augustine would reply that this must be the result if we are to conceive the land of truth, beauty and goodness as a far country to which we are pilgrims who may be destined never to arrive. But it is otherwise if communications are established between our present terrain and the better land beyond. If we are struggling forward with a consciousness of a citizenship which has not yet been realised, and our struggles represent the sum total of experience, we might well faint by the way. But if we are invested with a heavenly character by the movement towards us of all

that distinguishes the land of our hopes from the land of unattainment, the situation is different. We set up here the Kingdom of God, which there, in a perfect environment, shall bring forth its final fruit unto perfection. Metaphor ceases to be helpful when it brings us within sight of our ambition. Shall we say, then, we are moulded for the perfect life by influences that stream forth from its Author. God takes a step in our direction, calling out, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Carlyle's "Eternities and Immensities," behind which there lay the dogged metaphysic of the religious Scot, did not always bring him the ease of soul he sought. Froude tells us that once he said to Carlyle, "I believe in a God Who *does* something," and the sage of Chelsea cried out in bitterness of soul, "But He does nothing." Augustine strenuously urges the great ideal of a personal God Who makes Himself known to men. This new alignment of thought makes the step from earnest desire to a growing conviction that the goal is at once sought and found. It is sought in our earnest pursuit of the sublime. It is found in the fact that the Way, the Truth, the Life, is no longer an aspiration but finds its home in a living personality Who draws men to Himself. Both "pure" and "practical" Reason become vocal in the voice of the Eternal. Augustine, like Socrates, was a man of his time, and he clothed his message in the terms of his day. But like Socrates he was also a man of all time, for he laid reverent hands on eternal verities. *The Confessions* gives us the masterly descriptions of the struggles of a soul whom God had touched. *The City of God* gives us the vision which God gave to that struggling soul.

(iii) *The Mediæval Schoolmen* also display several types of the blending of Greek thought, more particularly in its Latin dress, with Christian Theology. There arise two schools, represented by Duns Scotus and Albertus Magnus, whose work found a better systematisation at the hands of Thomas Aquinas. In the earlier stage of Scholasticism the writings of Aristotle were viewed with grave suspicion. It may be said that Augustine was largely Platonist in his system, and his general views prevailed until the thirteenth century, when important modifications were introduced under the growing influence of Aristotle. The controversy between Duns Scotus and the opposing school centred

largely in the question of the supremacy of will or reason. Scotus and Abelard insisted that the Divine will was absolute, so that the command of God was the foundation of moral conduct. Aquinas and Bernard regarded will as the expression of the Eternal Nature and, in this sense, subject to Eternal Reason. The good was the revelation of the Being of God, and His will must be consonant with His Being.

Aquinas has exercised most influence. He kept Revelation and Philosophy distinct, but maintained that the two were in no way opposed. Faith transcended reason, and provided clues to many of the difficulties which reason is unable to solve. Man's highest good consists in achieving the true knowledge of God (*cf.* Aristotle's encomium on the contemplative life). To this end all man's intellectual powers are to be directed. Aquinas followed Aristotle further in providing a discussion of the various moral functions. The Church may be said to supply the place occupied by the State in the earlier Philosophy. Aquinas had a strong conception of corporate unity, and defended and elaborated the view mooted by Augustine that opponents of the dominant system should be punished with fines, imprisonments and, if necessary, death. The State punishes purveyors of false coin, but false opinions are much more dangerous. The influence of Aristotle's view of the perfect society is here most manifest. The Church is that perfect society, and therefore true morality is impossible apart from it. One, possibly unlooked-for, result is that morality as well as theology has taken on the shape of obedience to, or at least acquiescence in, a formulated system rather than an individual striving after the highest and best.

This may partly explain the fact that the actual progress in Ethics amongst the mass of the people during this period was comparatively small. The development of the social aspect of morality along authoritarian lines led to the system of casuistry formulated fully by the Jesuits and so severely assailed by Pascal. The system provides a set of intricate rules, based on the authority of the Church, which are applied to any given particular case, and determine the individual's conduct. There are two main elements in the system. (*a*) The recognition of a grading in moral principles by which an assumed higher law can suspend in a given instance an assumed lower one—*e.g.*, the obligation

to tell the truth may have to yield in certain circumstances to the obligation to save life. This feature, although greatly expanded in the casuistic direction, is not peculiar to the Jesuit formulation. It is a problem of Ethics that must arise in a reflective mind. It finds expression in Sanderson and Jeremy Taylor amongst Anglican divines. But (*b*) the peculiar feature against which Pascal directs his shafts of satire is the law of Probabilism which shifts the determination of ethical procedure from the individual to " the expert." The opinion of one leading doctor in Moral Theology is sufficient to render a course of action probable. As interest in a particular issue may direct inquiry towards the discovery of such an opinion, it is readily perceived that moral judgments may be seriously impaired by the intervention of a doctor of Moral Theology on the side of self-indulgence. The whole spirit of this type of casuistry is foreign to Protestant Theology and thought. The Rigorist school of Ethics with its insistence on " the categorical imperative " also takes up arms against the theory.

C. Modern Schools of Ethics

The present sketch must be very brief, and ought to be supplemented, checked and corrected by reference to a history of Ethics. The main types of Philosophy have exercised a powerful influence on ethical thought. The student should concentrate attention on these. Many, if not all, of the so-called modern schools are variations within certain well-defined types, or attempts at synthesis between two or more of the well-defined types. The following classification does not pretend to be complete, or strictly logical. Its object is to assist an investigator who is attempting to find his way through the complexities, and some confusions, in the realm of ethical thought today.

It is possible, whilst allowing for cross currents, to divide ethical systems into three main groups: I, Naturalistic; II, Intuitional; and III, Idealistic. Each one of these can be variously subdivided in relation to some dominant characteristic. [But again the student is warned that such subdivisions are not always strictly in accordance with the logical " law of definitions."] This particular enumeration follows that of R. A. P. Rogers.

I. *Naturalistic Systems.*

(i) Naturalism *per se*—(*a*) Egoistic, *e.g.* Hobbes.
(*b*) Sympathetic, *e.g.* Hume.
(*c*) Rationalistic, *e.g.* Spinoza.

(ii) Utilitarianism—(*a*) Egoistic, *e.g.* Bentham.
(*b*) Sympathetic, *e.g.* Mill.
(*c*) Intuitional—*e.g.*, Sidgwick.

(iii) Evolutionary Naturalism, *e.g.* Darwin and Spencer.

(iv) Socialistic Naturalism, *e.g.* Marx and Engels.

(v) Individualistic Naturalism, *e.g.* The German Schools of Goethe, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, etc.

II. *Intuitional.*

(i) Rational Intuitionism, *e.g.* Cudworth and Clarke.

(ii) Æsthetic Intuitionism, *e.g.* Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.

(iii) Sympathetic Intuitionism, *e.g.* Adam Smith.

(iv) Autonomic Intuitionism, *e.g.* Butler.

III. *Idealistic.*

(i) Moral Purism, *e.g.* Kant.

(ii) Rational Idealism, *e.g.* Fichte, Schelling and Hegel.

(iii) Pragmatism, *e.g.* James.

(iv) Vitalism, *e.g.* Bergson.

(v) Activism, *e.g.* Eucken.

(vi) Modern English Rational Idealism, *e.g.* Green.

It will provide the reader with a wholesome exercise if he will refer, in a reliable history of Ethics, to the sections describing the main principles of the leaders in these various systems, and compare each with the main principles of the Bible.

The following brief remarks on the main schools in modern Ethics may help to form thought on the more important elements. The Student must bear in mind throughout that Natural Ethics is concerned with the question, "What is the meaning of the distinction between right and wrong?"

It may not, in all cases, profess to give a complete answer, but it gives the only answer possible with the material at its disposal. Certain schools of thought have arisen in consequence of differing answers given to this question. It needs to be continually repeated and emphasised that all these schools are not mutually contradictory, and, as a consequence, elements from one system are incorporated into another.

Intuitionism

The Intuitive school found a graceful advocate in Dugald Stewart. It may be true, as Dr. Chalmers contended, that Dugald Stewart added nothing to the body of doctrine which he expressed, except a graceful form of expression. But that graceful form won wide acceptance for the view that conscience is an ultimate fact behind which it is idle to seek to go. " Right " and " wrong " ultimately resolve themselves into the inner voice that calls to man, " This is the way." The school of Reid in Scotland met all opponents with the cry, " Trust your intuitions, for you have nothing else to trust." Dr. McCosh carried over this " common sense " view to America and exercised a profound influence there.

It is not an answer to the Intuitive school to say that conscience speaks differently in different men and in different ages. They reply: " This is granted, but the ultimate fact is that conscience speaks. A sense of right and wrong may be cultivated and developed, but you can neither cultivate nor develop what is not there." Moral judgments are a necessary consequence of man's power of appraisement. They are as valid in their own sphere as judgments of experience based on laws of comparison, inference and deduction. You estimate an action as moral and that is an end of the matter. The Intuitive school did good service in pointing out the existence of what Kant called " the practical reason." But men felt a grave uneasiness in thus multiplying ultimate and unrelated facts. Granted, *e.g.*, that conscience can be educated, what is the precise relation between the educative process and the intuition on which conscience depends? Can the fact of moral appraisement be regarded as indeed ultimate and yet differences in choice be adequately explained in this system?

A difficulty arises here similar to that which confronted the ancient Sophists. Is there a universal intuition which is the same in all men? If there is not, what is the criterion by which a sound moral intuition may be judged? Bishop Butler, *e.g.*, was certain that "the plain, honest man" always saw the path of duty. But Butler's plain, honest man was too patently a typical John Bull with a reverence for "The King, the Church and the Constitution." In attempting to estimate the value of different alternatives recourse was had freely to the ancient exponents of Ethics. Bishop Butler, *e.g.*, appears as a diligent student of Aristotle.

The lines of the answer developed broadly, as has been stated, into Hedonistic Naturalism in its two forms of Egoistic and Utilitarian Hedonism and the various types of Rationalistic Ethics. The last title is unfortunate, as it suggests that all other systems are devoid of reason. The student must make the necessary allowance for difficulties in terminology. The three forms mentioned are distinguished by supplying a different base of action for the individual. Evolutionary Ethics is a modern development that also has to be considered.

Egoistic Hedonism

Hedonism frankly states that no movement takes place except there is a desire to secure pleasure or to avoid pain. Pleasure and pain are the ultimates and the power of appraisement relates directly to them. The schoolboy's evaluation of geography in "1066 and All That" offers quite an excellent illustration of simple Hedonism. "This is a bad thing, as it is the cause of increased geography." Further, pain is to be avoided. But that does not solve the problem. Pleasure is satisfied desire. Feeding desire sometimes makes it insatiable. The pursuit of pleasure becomes a tyranny and a pain. Satisfaction seems more likely to be ultimate than desire. A surfeited stomach loathes food. The pleasure is in meeting the demand of hunger, not primarily in eating. Satisfaction demands the permanent, and desire is not permanent, nor is pleasure. Stoics and Epicureans united in praising freedom from desire as a state of permanent happiness. The paradox of Hedon-

ism quickly manifests itself. "The proper way to secure pleasure is not to seek for it."

Again, as Aristotle pointed out, "Man is a social animal." My neighbour has a great deal to do with my happiness or my misery. My very pleasure in satisfied desire demands the consent or co-operation of others. But pleasure is peculiarly individual. Others can give me pleasure, but my pleasure is mine alone. Is there any community in pleasure? Is there any standard of comparison by which different pleasures can be either equated for numerical purposes or graded for ethical purposes? The second question affects all schools of Hedonism. The first was considered by the Egoistic school. The Egoistic school differed from the Utilitarian in its answer to the question, "Is my neighbour normally a friend or an enemy?" The Egoistic school, powerfully represented by Hobbes, chose the second alternative. The Utilitarian school of Bentham and Mill chose the first.

The stage is thus re-set, and we have to consider what can be said in favour of Egoism, when attention is directed to the part my neighbour plays in increasing or modifying my pleasure or my pain. Hobbes becomes an important representative, as his attitude largely determines the argument of Bishop Butler, and so, indirectly, profoundly influences the trend of English ethical thought, even though it be by the way of reaction. Hobbes, Mandeville, and the school of which they are distinguished representatives, held that all men are naturally wolves. A patriotic cartoon some years ago represented a rather ugly bulldog sitting on a Union Jack, and underneath the slogan was written, "What we have we'll hold,"—a natural sentiment which is transferred to the Stock Exchange under the symbol of a bull. But others also want to have, and make the holding difficult. Hence compromises are made. We surrender half a loaf to save the other half. Nothing prompts our surrender except the desire to keep as much as we can for ourselves. Co-operation consists in a series of grudging concessions. The highwayman robs the rich because he wants what the rich man possesses. He gives to the poor in order to create a company of watch-dogs who will better ensure his safety from the Bow Street "runners."

As a result of this need of co-operation based on necessary concessions a system of conventions has arisen. Things

are labelled "good" or "bad" as they take their place in ministering to man's acquisitiveness, disguised because of the necessity of placating the equally acquisitive neighbours. "Law" thus comes into being, and "law" is supported by "force." "God" or "good" is on the side of the biggest battalions. Self-love is the dominant motive in all action. That is "good" which ministers to my self-love or, in the alternative, saves me from destruction and my goods from spoliation. That is "bad" which tends to disturb the armed neutrality that alone permits me to hold that which I have—in peace. The thief is punished, on the theory, not because he is a thief, but because he is a fool. He has not learned the art of robbing his neighbours without being found out. Conscience is a compound of the instinct of self-protection and a number of inherited customs. Laws are imposed for safety, but are reverenced as the result of long habit. "Common Law" is the expression of those elementary conditions which make life in a community possible. "Against which no contradictory principle is discoverable in all history," as lawyers put it.

Sordid as the scheme appears when robbed of the embellishments of a clever style and psychological illustration, it must be borne in mind that it represents a phase of human nature. It is not necessary to adopt the whole system to perceive that it enshrines a deep truth. A pessimist was once defined as "a fellow who has got to live with an optimist." The revival of pessimism in the system of Schopenhauer and Hartmann gives point to the skit. The easy-going view that men are naturally not wolves but lambs has to be countered by the obvious fact that men are distorted in outlook and depraved in morals. The very word "selfish," which ought to be a natural designation, but imports grave misdirection, is itself an eloquent testimony to the truth that lies hidden in Hobbes' view. Practical Ethics, or the want of it, often shows evidence of greed, avarice, suspicion and envy. All law is not designed to forward moral endeavour. A careful study of the school that makes ethical judgments consist in protective conventions is necessary if the whole picture of human endeavour is to be painted. Yet it can be shown that the unlovely elements are "accidental," and that a wider freedom is found in the union of social beings than in the solitariness of the individual. The evils that dog moral endeavour

are hindrances of a perverted nature, and not essential constituents of that search after a final realisation of personality which includes other human beings in its wide scope. The Christian doctrine of the Fall of man explains all that is true in the theory, and avoids the extreme of regarding the final end as the satisfaction of a solitary being.

Utilitarianism

Under this head, as has been noticed in the analysis, several different points of view can be collected. The main conception, however, is that " happiness," associated with the feeling of pleasure, is the highest good of man. But individual happiness is subordinated, in the later writers, to " The greatest good of the greatest number." In this form the system becomes a system of Universalistic Hedonism.

Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill insist on taking the view that a man's neighbour is normally a friend and only accidentally an enemy. Co-operation is essential for the full development of man's nascent powers. To restrict our lives to the pleasure of the moment, or to the satisfaction of purely personal needs, is to narrow the scope of our being. In society we find a wide expansion, that results in an ever-deepening satisfaction. Confidence in the destiny of man is a strong, vibrant note in the new Ethics associated with the names of Bentham and Mill. Bentham saw a new world opening, and Mill witnessed a growth and complexity that outdistanced in a short time all previous developments that had been registered over a long period of time.

The uniformity which had persisted for a considerable period had been broken and rapid advance in many directions was being manifested. Buckle's *History of Civilisation* embodies the new spirit. The old conception of man finding his true expansion in the State, so characteristic of Greek thought, took rise again. It was strongly tinged with the new individualism, but the contradiction was not yet apparent.

If friendly co-operation is the base of sound development, then " The greatest happiness of the greatest number " would seem to be the natural goal of human endeavour. Hedonism, conceived as the mere individual emotion of

pleasure, now gives place to a wider concept of happiness. This happiness is realised and is only realisable in an ordered society in which each member enjoys reasonable liberty.

Art and Science must become as nearly universal as possible in the distribution of their benefits. Picture galleries, museums, public parks, cheap travelling facilities, general education, might be taken as public evidences of the sincerity of the Utilitarian movement, which still exercises a very great influence on ethical ideas.

Though these new proposals were an important advance, as compared with Egoistic Hedonism, they were not free from difficulty. The question proposed above, as to whether different pleasures can be either equated for numerical purposes or graded for ethical purposes, now begins to press for an answer. Happiness was seen to be a vague concept. Why should it be assumed that happiness is uniform, and intended to be universal? The happiness of a cat has often disastrous results for a mouse. Even the herd instinct has not eliminated, but rather extended, the battle of the bricks.

What is the principle of evaluation? The protective instinct sponsored by Hobbes gave us at least half a loaf, which is better than no bread. Does a diffusion of a limited degree of contentment over a wide area total better in the general purpose of things than the cultivation of ecstasy in a select limited number? Is the old-fashioned theory that it is better not to educate "the lower orders" as "they are happier as they are" worthy of serious consideration? So problems multiply. While, therefore, we may concede to Utilitarianism a great advance, in its recognition of the fact that man realises his ethical being most fully in society, we are still set upon the search for that principle under which this movement towards self-realisation may be most adequately determined. Happiness in the sense of a feeling of pleasure is peculiarly individualistic, and cannot be employed as a wholly satisfactory criterion in a system that seeks to emerge from the individualistic position.

Evolutionism

Herbert Spencer endeavoured to meet the problem of varying values at varying stages by applying the principle

of evolution, then becoming dominant in scientific circles, to man's ethical development. Evolution is a term which has suffered much from being continually bandied about. Writers on evolutionary Ethics generally assume that the history of the race has been conditioned by the operation of a number of natural instincts, which can be traced from a rudimentary form up to very high moral postulates. There are two forces operating: (*a*) altruistic (the impulse towards the preservation of the race), (*b*) egoistic (the impulse towards the preservation of the individual). The standard of conduct is the evolutionary perfection of the race. The individual either shares in that evolution, or he has to perish, as many extinct animals testify. Conduct is " good " or " bad " in so far as it aids or hinders the evolutionary process. According to the form in which this general theory is developed by Herbert Spencer, a primitive homogeneity develops by natural law into a marked heterogeneity. The operation of natural causes similarly develops an increasing complexity in the moral situation. Instead of " the good " we have an ever-increasing variety of " goods." The collision between them, and the substitution of one for the other, is an inevitable condition of growth. Morals take hue from their environment. That which served the savage is intolerable to the civilised man, and is therefore incontinently discarded. Becoming useless or harmful in a particular line of development, it becomes " bad." The search after a final end is a mistake. We must consider the moral needs of our age, and adapt ourselves to our own environment.

It has been pointed out that to make a valuation of this sort, the individual really steps outside the natural process. None of the lower stages in the animal world were conditioned by conscious adaptation. Hence a direct criticism of the evolutionary theory is made with telling effect by Rogers, to whom reference has been made already. He points out that the evolutionary Ethics assumes without proof the intuitional position. Change is not progress. The former simply asserts that there are two separate facts, one supervening on the other in the complex of time. The latter assumes that there is a goal or end, and introduces a wholly new evaluation.

Huxley was sensible of this criticism. It is not often noticed that there is a conflict between Huxley and Spencer

in the moral realm. Spencer seeks to make our moral development follow on a par with our physical evolution and the evolution of the race. Huxley, on the contrary, makes ethical development consist in combating nature. There is for him only a specious resemblance between the struggle for survival in nature and the foundation of moral codes. "Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process. . . . The ethical progress of society depends not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it." The thoughtful student will observe the relevancy of this quotation to the criticism that has been levelled against the evolutionary theory. Here Huxley deliberately places man *outside the cosmic process*. He is bold enough to declare that whatever has been accomplished in the moral sphere has been in direct opposition to the principle of the struggle for existence observable in the animal world.

The Rationalistic Theory

A further criticism of *Evolutionism* brings us to the last which we shall notice of the modern types of ethical theory —*Rationalistic or Teleological*. Thomas Hill Green is a distinguished exponent of English Rationalistic Ethics, and entered the lists against Herbert Spencer. He charges the evolutionary theory with ignoring the significance of self-consciousness. If the lapwing, according to Spencer's illustration, lures a traveller from its nest by a deliberate device, consciously simulating a broken wing, so that its nestlings may escape harm, then it is a moral being with a conscience and the capacity for predetermined self-sacrifice. If it lacks purposive self-determination, then the resemblance between its action and the deliberate sacrifice of a human mother is superficial and illusory. Perhaps Green's criticism of Locke might also find place against Herbert Spencer. "He thought that whatever he could describe he had explained." But, from the psychological side, evolutionary Ethics throws much light upon human reactions. It has its value in enabling us to relate experiences to their proper physical and psychological antecedents and conditions.

But side by side with attempted empirical derivations of

customs and morals, there runs the current of what has been called "rational" Ethics. The answer to the question "Why this moral effort?" is found, for this school, in the necessity inherent in reason to expand and develop a moral code in relation to human actions. Spinoza in the seventeenth century developed his theory of "conatus," an inner urge to self-realisation. This is an inevitable consequence of man's relation to the Eternal Substance which is the core and explanation of all being. Kant found that consciousness expressed itself in two realms. There was a realm of the "Pure" and a realm of the "Practical" Reason. Green, adopting in the main the philosophical position of Hegel, finds the explanation of all moral effort in the desire for self-satisfaction. The exploration of avenues of conduct that result in a check to the human spirit creates a moral code of "good" and "bad." The "good" is that which offers the widest expansions to the inner impulse of the soul in its search after the complete filling of its being. Progress is conditioned by an ever-widening concept of the inner ideal. This self-consciousness is a part of the universal consciousness which lies at the heart of reality and constitutes the explanation of all existence. Consequently, "You cannot do good to yourself without doing good to others, and you cannot do good to others without doing good to yourself." The conflict between self-love and benevolence is thus resolved. The system propounded by Green and his fellows has profound significance for the student. It directs attention to the results of human conduct, and values actions as "good" or "bad" according to these results. It has a forward look to that "far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves." It gives intelligent purpose a high place in passing judgment upon actions, and relieves man from the oppression that comes with the sense of being a mere automaton. The modern psychological slogan of "trial and error" has its place here.

All such views, it should be noted, assume that there is an end, and that man is so constituted as to seek it. They link up, as we have seen, with the view of "conatus" in Philosophy, so earnestly expounded by Spinoza, and revived in an attractive form by Bergson. But they do not offer any very convincing explanation as to why progress, instead of being in a straight line, should be characterised

by irregular movements, most of them disappointing. Thoughtful critics have felt that the analysis of blameworthiness is scarcely satisfactory. Repentance is an afterthought arising from disappointment. The road we took leads in a wrong direction, and we must sorrowfully retrace our steps. Repentance is real, but blame is a confused recognition that imagined progress is really actual retrogression, or at best arrested development. Our new experience of disappointment sets us upon a fresh endeavour, and we fancy we could have made the second effort while lacking the experience occasioned by the first. This is not so, but our fancy leads us to blame ourselves for not profiting by an experience which still lay beyond us. And so even here questions crowd in upon us. Is evil simply a lesser good? Is the emotion or rational concept of repentance valid? How is the individual centre of consciousness related to the Eternal Consciousness which inspires it? Is remorse a valid moral judgment or a mistaken envisaging of a present experience in a past condition, where such an experience is impossible?

It is not to be wondered at that the Pragmatist steps in here, and invites us to abandon all such inquiries as metaphysical. In one sense, at least, Pragmatism returns to Herbert Spencer and takes "the good" as that which works. It suggests that there may be many methods of securing inner harmony, and refuses to worry over the method so long as the result is achieved. Thus the round of human speculation seems to be complete, and we begin again the long conflict which emerged when the Sophists propounded the view that "man is the measure of all things." The theology which bases itself on "the religious experience of man" is, or ought to be, frankly pragmatic.

CHAPTER X

WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY "THE GOOD"?

MOST PEOPLE ARE quite ready, on slight provocation, to label the conduct of an individual or of a Government. We are all (however much we may labour to persuade ourselves, or others, to the contrary) habitually passing judgment on our actions or those of other men. We tend to justify our own actions while we more frequently condemn those of others. There is an inherent conviction that we are right—that is, that our evaluation of things, and consequently our attitude in relation to any course of action, is justifiable. Without this conviction there would be no urge to action, no insistence on a particular alternative. The tendency may rapidly degenerate into pig-headed obstinacy and unrelieved censoriousness, and we require to guard ourselves against these dangers. But in itself, apart from such unwelcome aberrations, it is the spring of all concerted effort. We find ourselves thinking, and often saying, "That is surely wrong," "That is something which ought not to be done." But when we are asked on what grounds we have made our assessment, we find it difficult to give a complete answer. Hasty generalisations are the bane of knowledge. Yet many moral judgments are passed without careful examination of the circumstances, and with scant attention to the motives which may have inspired the action under review.

Hence the relevance and importance of an inquiry into what constitutes "good" and whether we can envisage "the good" which men should seek. Two questions obtrude themselves. Is there a universal standard? and What is the universal standard by which conduct is to be judged? These two questions arise naturally from the consideration of the question: What is "the good" which men should seek? It will be seen on a moment's reflection that there are "goods" which are not "the good." That is to say, they are things which have a particular utility, and yet have not a universal appeal, still less a

universal authority. A simple illustration may serve to make this point clear. Suppose the question to be asked, "Why does a particular person take up the study of Latin?" That language may be studied for more than one reason:—

(i) It may be studied for its intrinsic value—*i.e.*, there are to many minds a beauty and an interest in the Latin language which makes it worth studying for its own sake.

(ii) It is useful as an introduction to other studies, whether these consist of another language or are of a theological or scientific nature which makes Latin desirable as an introduction to their terminology.

(iii) It has an educational value as providing a mental discipline.

Latin viewed in these different relations may be an end in itself; a means to an end; or both a means and an end. But all do not study Latin. Some would deny it a place in an educative curriculum, thinking that the ends outlined, except (i), may be better secured by a greater proportion of scientific preparation, preferring to alter theological and scientific terminology, or to secure acquaintance with it by a series of limited definitions. In the world of conduct there are also various possibilities before a man. To what pursuit in life should he chiefly devote his powers is a question which admits of various answers. As there are conflicting interests, the problem arises as to what ultimate *end* a man should pursue and what are the means of determining relative, and possibly absolute, values.

So that which is consciously approved and pursued by any individual *for its own sake* is, in a limited sense, to be regarded as "good." Nothing is pursued for its own sake unless a desire to secure it has arisen in the individual. Things which bring pleasure are desired and can be regarded as "good" in a limited sense. But the very fact that "desire" and "pleasure" enter into the consideration of "good" creates conflict. A man may have to resist the appeal of a present pleasure in order to fulfil a further desire. He may be saving to build a home and may resist the appeal of travel or a sea-voyage, or some other pleasure that can only be obtained by spending a portion of his savings. It is because of moral conflicts of this sort, that the statement is made that a specific pleasure, or a particular desire, is not always synonymous with the "good." The "good" becomes that course which is elected for pursuit out of a

number of possible alternatives, all of them associated with "desire" and "pleasure." Again, within the range of the satisfaction of "pleasure" or "desire" we find that there is such a thing as a relative "good." Certain pursuits fulfil the conditions, yet become injurious if carried to excess, and sometimes nauseate where previously they attracted. "Goods" are thus relative, and also mutually exclusive. Two desires in themselves equally attractive cannot be pursued at the same time, and either of them may conflict with some settled habit of mind or conduct.

A very important distinction in this connection arises between the immediate and the ultimate good. The former is usually of comparatively short duration and has a limited appeal to a present local experience, the latter is usually of a more lasting and widespread nature. The latter is of greater importance. Often an immediate "good" is cheerfully forfeited in order to achieve an ultimate "good." (A man may discipline his life, and forgo immediate and transient satisfaction in order to secure a good degree, an established position, an enhanced reputation, etc.) If it is worth while to surrender the immediate good for a more remote good that still has a relative character attaching to it, we are led on to suggest that there is an ultimate good at the very apex of the ethical scale of "goods" towards which our highest endeavour should be directed.

At this stage it may be helpful to consider the usual distinction between "subjective good" and "objective good." Coleridge is responsible for fixing this terminology in an opposite direction to that which previously prevailed, and we use the terms in his sense rather than that of, say, Descartes and the earlier philosophers. That is subjective which belongs to the range of the individual's consciousness. It is an idea or concept in the mind of the moral subject. That is regarded as objective which is conceived as having a value and existence apart from the individual, even though it must be apprehended in the individual's consciousness. The two elements belong to every true experience. Great care must be exercised in the use of the distinction, or it may become a mere handy term of depreciation when other arguments fail. There is no such thing as the absolutely subjective. Or, to put it in another way, if there is an absolutely subjective, then it is incommunicable. As

Green put it many years ago, "A consistent sensationalism would be speechless." The subjective is the unrelated particular, and the unrelated particular remains in its isolation, and cannot be the subject of reflection. But "subjective" is popularly used for a limited relation. The field of investigation is limited, the data are few, and as a consequence the judgments have not the wide range of universality that they might have, were reflections more profound and the observed data more numerous. "Subjective" and "objective" are themselves relative terms. Taken in this sense, the lesser goods are less objective. The ultimate good is the completion of all moral relations which resolves the antithesis. The highest ethical good identifies subject and object in a fully articulated whole. In another sense of the terms, not altogether distinct from that which has been considered, the subjective aspect of the good is the end which is capable of being reached by his own deliberate effort within the circumstances in which the individual is placed.

Many problems in Ethics have been occasioned by rigid definitions, which hold two aspects firmly apart which may be found ultimately to coalesce. Of these definitions we may notice two of the chief. (*a*) There are those who define "the good" as consisting in conformity in conduct to a prescribed standard imposed by a law of life conceived of as external to the individual. (*b*) There are those who define "the good" as the pursuit of an end conceived of as arising in the needs or desires of the individual who pursues it. The first definition tends to lay emphasis on reason as a cognising power. The main thought is that there is a law or rule of life apprehended by conscience which is binding upon men, and to which their actions ought to conform. It is the conception of *Duty*. The second definition tends to lay emphasis on the emotions. This view conceives the ultimate end to be that of *Well-being* or *Happiness*. When these two conceptions are held apart in thought two different evaluations in regard to the results of action emerge. In conformity with the first definition, the good is presented as an unchangeable standard to which men conform or approximate. Consequences do not matter. In apportioning praise or blame reference must be made to the standard alone. In conformity with the second definition, the good is presented

as relative, it may be progressive, but it must be different in different circumstances. Consequences are important as revealing to us the true inwardness of actions. With the accumulation of experience there is a development in the conception of the good. A third definition refuses to hold these two conceptions wholly apart. It stands closely related to the views of Plato and Aristotle. It regards "the good" as that which is conducive to the fullest development of the personality, and which promotes the fulfilment of the potentialities of the race. It declines to regard humanity as a collection of isolated individuals, but seeks to find in the progress of the individual the progress of the race. "The good" is the resolution of antipathies arising from limited and therefore, in the sense already indicated, subjective deductions. "Morality is possible only in society." In the next chapter these views will be discussed at greater length, and there will be of necessity some repetitions, which we trust will be pardoned, in the attempt made to relate problems more nearly to the question of "the moral standard."

(N.B.—The above summaries have been presented to indicate the chief findings of Natural Ethics, without reference to the distinctly Christian claims, for which see pages 150 *ff.*)

CHAPTER XI

WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL MORAL STANDARD?

THE AIM OF THE present chapter is to provide a summary of the arguments for and against the predominating views concerning the moral standard. They will be considered in the following order:

A. *Law*—(*a*) Theocratic; (*b*) Intuitional.

B. *Well-being*—(*a*) Hedonistic; (*b*) Utilitarian.

C. *Evolutionary Perfection.*

The warning must be repeated that these divisions are not strictly logical. Further, before proceeding to examine various theories, it is necessary to emphasise that the attitude of the reader towards the question of a standard will tend to gravitate towards one or other of the categories mentioned above. He will either regard the standard as fixed and immutable, being (*a*) external to the nature of his own mind, *e.g.* having its source in God, or " in the nature of things " being (*b*) inherent in the mind, *e.g.* as conscience or " the categorical imperative "; or else he will regard it as progressive, and to be assessed in accordance with the ends in view. There is an element of truth in both tendencies, and it is worth noting that Christianity—as so often it does in other branches of philosophy—provides the clue to the synthesis.

A. Law as the Universal Standard

At the outset it is necessary to define law. The word is commonly employed today in the following meanings:

(i) *The Laws of Nature*, which are constant and inviolable, *e.g.* the law of gravity.

(ii) *The Laws of a Nation*, which may be changed by the rulers or the people, and may also be violated by members of the community.

(iii) *Laws of Experience*, which are relative, and are in process of accretion and modification with the growth of experience, *e.g.* the rules of agriculture and navigation.

(iv) *The Moral Law.* In his excellently summarised

Manual of Ethics, MacKenzie indicates the four main lines along which laws can be classified: (*a*) Those which can be changed and violated; (*b*) those that can be changed but cannot be violated; (*c*) those that can be violated but cannot be changed; (*d*) those that can neither be changed nor violated.

The use of the term law in Ethics belongs to the third type—*i.e.*, a man may break the moral law, but he cannot suspend or modify it. The moral law states what he ought to do; he may not, however, choose to do it.

Another illustrative division has been used by some writers and may prove of help. The laws of Nature describe what *is*. The laws of jurisprudence declare what *must be*. The laws of experience indicate what *can be*. The moral law urges what *ought to be*.

Law has been discussed as the universal standard in three chief forms: (i) The Theocratic view, (ii) The views of the Stoics and Intuitional Schools, (iii) The views of Kant.

(i) *The Theocratic View* states that the moral law is to be accepted as the will of God from Whom the law derives its authority. It has its fullest expression in the Old Testament Scriptures (particularly the Pentateuch). Christian readers will feel little disposition to question the Divine authority in this respect. The following objections have been urged against this presentation: (*a*) If the moral law depends on the fiat of a supernatural Being, it constitutes *must* and not *ought*. In other words it is purely external to the individual moral consciousness and is enforceable by penalties rather than determined by an act of will. As some express it, "The reason for compliance lies outside the act." (*b*) If a thing is right or wrong simply because God wills it, then if He chose to give an opposite command, things that are now classed as "bad" would become "good"—*i.e.*, God's holiness, righteousness and love become synonymous with His will, and are meaningless in their usual ethical sense (*cf.* the previous reference to Duns Scotus and Abelard, who at least tended towards this interpretation). (*c*) No reason is given why man should obey the Divine law. He did not seek to be created and placed under that law.

On these grounds the modern student of Ethics tends to reject the Divine law as the sole source, sometimes even as a source, of the ethical "ought." In answer to these ob-

jections the Christian is entitled to point out that they assume quite a large number of important considerations —*e.g.*, that the only relation of God to man is that of an external potentate; that "creation" must mean the bringing into being of an unrelated individual with perfect freedom of attitude to the Creator; that an expression of will is capable of complete divorce from an expression of character; that a moral end cannot find full expression in a personality other than that of the individual who conceives it, which brings us back to Sophism and incidentally denies any value to example.

In simpler form it is open to the Christian to reply (*a*) that a command may indicate a capacity in the person commanded, and may stimulate it into activity. Man can respond to God's requirements, and the possibility of response is not unrelated to the question of obligation. (*b*) As already indicated, God's attributes cannot be regarded as isolated one from the other, but as forming a complete unity. His will is the manifestation of all His attributes directed to a perfect end. We must not abandon the old "faculty" Psychology when dealing with man, and then restore it in its most unrelated form when dealing with God. (*c*) If we derive our life from God we might expect that in some particulars we would discover affinities with the Life from which we came, and therefore the Divine fiat is reflected in the human "ought." It is not for the creature to construct some new moral principle, nor, indeed, is it possible for the creature *qua* creature to do so. There is much commonsense in the homely saying, "I am as God made me." There is something akin to absurdity in a finite being claiming either the right to choose oblivion instead of existence, or an assumed moral prerogative to reconstitute the nature with which God endowed it. (There are other problems that are better discussed under the questions surrounding freedom and responsibility; see pages 135 *ff.*)

(ii) *The Views of the Stoics and Intuitionists.*—In place of the personal authority of God, the Stoics and Intuitionists found the authority for the fundamental and unchanging moral law in "the Nature of things" or in the mind.

(*a*) *The Law of Nature.*—The Stoics, as we have already seen, counselled men to live "according to Nature." They meant by that phrase that men should penetrate to the

essential principles controlling and lying behind natural phenomena, and shape their lives in harmony with these. They believed in what may be called communion with "universal reason" and contended that the dictates of such a reason held, and should be obeyed regardless of personal consequences, such as individual suffering. Virtue consisted in true obedience to the laws of Nature, and should be sought for its own sake. Their view is somewhat similar to the Theocratic view, except that "the soul" or animating principle of the world is not conceived as personal. There is no personal God.

Great as have been the services of the Stoics to the cause of ethical progress, there are inherent weaknesses in their system which displayed themselves at an early stage. The Epicureans illustrate one of these. The end to which Nature is tending is not demonstrable. The Epicurean said practically that inward repose is that end. To be free from internal disorder is to follow Nature. The Stoic, on the contrary, tended to severe repression of feeling. To ignore rather than to harmonise discordant desires was to follow Nature. The fact that these diverse conceptions persisted for so long warns us that safety cannot be found immediately in a mere dictum. The Stoics placed a somewhat arbitrary meaning on "Nature." It was the order of the universe which "the wise man" perceived and followed. And "the wise man" was the Stoic. Nature, as it were, was not left alone but directed, so far as the individual life was concerned. There seemed to be an argument in a circle. We follow the Nature "the wise man" discerns, and we are wise because we discern it.

What is the criterion? The question arises "Are not even transient emotions part of Nature?" Why then ignore or repress them? The Greek sentiment of contempt for the body illustrates this inherent weakness. It is a strange philosophy of conduct that begins with the world as "the Son of God" and ends with a theory of emancipation from the outward form in which our mental life finds expression. Again, what Christians call the problem of sin is not solved. Man is a part of Nature, and yet, on the theory, refuses to follow it in certain circumstances. How has Nature lost control over her own product? If desires can be tempered to the end towards which Nature is striving, why are they not always so tempered so that no moral problem arises?

If they are idle obstructions to the path of virtue, what principle accounts for the obstructions? The Stoics were not wholly unaware of such problems, but for the most part they contented themselves with the facts of possible alternatives in conduct, and did not seek to develop the reasons. As in Aristotle, Ethics rests with them largely on an empirical base. But an empirical following of Nature was a return at least in part to the Sophist position. More than one set of empirical formulæ may prove necessary, as conditions of human life are not uniform.

(*b*) *The Fitness of Things.*—The Æsthetic school of philosophers apprehended some of these difficulties, and sought to overcome them. Basing their view on the idea that Nature, when studied carefully, offered a guide to right conduct, they maintained that certain principles underlie all observed differences and relations, and these principles determine for each what is fit or unfit in the circumstances. The more attention is concentrated upon the interrelations between things and persons, the more will it become possible for the individual to achieve ethical "fitness."

This view has been criticised on the ground that it substitutes a morality of "taste" for a morality of righteous conduct. A relic of it may be found in the "bad form" principle that still largely regulates modern behaviour, and takes sometimes very strange shapes, especially amongst schoolboys and undergraduates. It finds its way into drawing-rooms, where we are told that "no *nice* person" would do certain things. It is valuable inasmuch as it creates at least a working convention. Certain disturbing actions are ruled out of conduct. But on examination it will be found that the criticism noticed above—viz., that "taste" is an insufficient criterion of conduct—holds good. The tendency of the Æsthetic school is to acquiesce in more or less fixed rules imposed by existing social conditions. It rests content with what has been determined in the light of securing peaceful social conditions. It is apt to be impatient of any reform. The polite cold shoulder is turned to the enthusiast, whether in religious or common moral development. It is a sufficient answer to all appeals to say, "The thing is simply not done in our set." In a more philosophic form the criticism would run that "feeling" is at all times obscure. A "sense of fitness"

is an undefined base for moral conduct, and rapidly degenerates into the performance of routine, without offering any reason. The "sense" becomes an appeal to "the herd instinct." In practice mutual antipathies arise, class divisions are engendered, and the moral æsthete tends to re-echo the pharisaic proverb, "This people that knoweth not the law are cursed." Most of us have suffered at some time from the raised eyebrow of the unintelligent conformist.

(*c*) *The Laws of the Mind and Conscience.*—Under this heading are grouped various types of Intuitionalism, which can only be indicated briefly.

"*The Moral Sense*" school is linked very closely to "the fitness" school, which has just been considered. But it has tried to come to closer terms with some aspects of the problem of morality. Its members point out that there must be some faculty in man which corresponds to the feeling that he ought to obey certain requirements. They relate the sense of the fitness of things to a particular sense of right and wrong, to which they give a place of autonomy. The "moral sense" informs us what is right, and is itself adjusted to the universal good along the lines suggested by Plato. This view is an improvement on "the sense of fitness in things" in so far as it insists on bringing all such "fitness" under an all-embracing category which stands apart and is unique. It demands, therefore, that convention should be subjected to criticism. But while all this must be admitted the "moral sense" itself is not lifted from the realm of Æstheticism. In so far as it is capable of analysis, it resolves itself into a feeling of propriety.

A pertinent criticism is that the cart is here put before the horse. The "moral sense," it is contended, is really a deduction from experience, and depends on experience for its content. We have refrained from urging the objection against theories that they are "abstract," because in certain senses all laws are "abstract." We ought not to expect a moral principle to do more than offer rules of conduct which gain concretion by their application to particular instances. The word "abstract," like a good many others, may be a convenient cloak for ignorance. But this criticism is not of that character. It means that certain moral principles are widely observed with the result that habit and education create a prepossession in their

favour. Men tend to obey them instinctively, and this "instinct" is suddenly exalted into "a moral sense." Our habituations create our morality, and without further ado we call them an instinctive moral sense. The popular argument, "I can see no harm in it," is an appeal to moral sense, and we cannot fail to see that the result of such an appeal is to create very different practical standards, all of them regulated by the immediate habituations of the individuals concerned.

Conscience. Butler sought to replace the moral sense by conscience. He contended that man was possessed of the ability to direct his steps according to a law of righteousness. This ability is a law-making faculty, examining life in all its relations, and controlling emotions and bodily appetites in the interest of two major principles, self-love and benevolence. In a perfectly ordered world there would be no conflict between self-love and benevolence. But we are an inferior part of the creation of God, our impulses tend to break out on every occasion that excites them, and so conscience, while always arbitrating justly, is frequently overpowered and disobeyed. Butler was faced with the individual character of conscience, and sought to solve the problem of various decisions given by different individuals, by positing that "the plain, honest man" always knew what he should do. But, as we have said previously, "The plain, honest man" of Butler is too unmistakably "honest John Bull" with a King, Church and Constitution. Still he saw dimly that there must be a universal standard to which each individual conscience ought to conform.

Butler's view of the supremacy of conscience puts him in line with the Rationalists in Ethics, who seek to replace "feeling" or "sense" by an appeal to reason. Other writers of this school prefer to abandon the direct employment of the word "conscience" and to substitute for it the practical reason, or reason undefined by any adjective. They press back to the foundation principles of Ethics, and find them in the ultimate postulates of reason, beyond which it is impossible to go. Just as Aristotle developed the foundation of Formal Logic as expressed in the *Dictum de omni et nullo*, which is a given principle on which all truth depends, so these writers insist that there is a self-evident principle of morality, which is equally universal, and on which all moral deductions depend. A morally

bad act is like a false syllogism. It cannot deny or suspend the operation of reason, but it can, and does, violate the foundation principle on which reason works. A morally good act conforms to that principle.

Two objections are usually urged against all such theories. The objection is made which we have already refused to employ, that they are too abstract. The promoters of the views under review might well retort that they are no more abstract than the principle of Formal Logic, and no less indispensable. This objection, however, is very popular at present amongst certain moralists who carry it further into the sphere of the apprehension of truth, and assure us that "Life is larger than logic." We need to be on our guard against phrases of this kind. Formal Logic does not give us the content of ratiocination as applied to everyday circumstances, but it never pretended to do so. Formal Logic does, however, give us the rule by which our ratiocination is conducted, and we neglect it at our peril. An "undistributed middle" remains a blunder no matter how the minor premiss has been procured. Similarly, we are disposed to assert that Rational Ethics cannot be dismissed on the ground that it offers no immediate directions for filling up an Income Tax paper. It may well be that, like Formal Logic, it can supply an unalterable principle which lies behind each particular development.

But a second criticism applies equally to what has been called the pure, and to the practical reason. There is no real explanation of aberration. The advocates of the appeal to reason are usually firm believers in what they call "the ultimate triumph of rationality," but the burden presses, "Why should it be ultimate?" The psychologists speak blandly of "trial and error," and as a practical description of human progress the terms must be accepted. But why should there be the undistributed middle of Formal Logic, or the unethical proposition of Formal Ethics? What, for example (on the theory), is the explanation of repentance? To some, repentance means the discovery of error, and nothing more. The experience of disappointment enters as an ingredient into the fresh determination, and it is a mistake to imagine that we approach the fresh decision with the same personal moral content as that with which we faced our earlier alternative, when we made a false choice. This is true psychologically, but leaves unanswered

the ultimate problem, " Why did we go wrong if we are creatures of reason ?"

(iii) *Kant.*—Kant is a prince among the Rationalists. His statements are outstanding and unique, and have exercised such a profound influence that it is well to notice them a little more particularly. It is interesting to notice that Kant is of Scottish descent, and that it was a Scotchman, David Hume, who impelled him to a close examination of the principles underlying Truth, Beauty and Goodness. The result is found in the three works, *The Kritik of the Pure Reason*, *The Theory of Judgment*, and *The Kritik of the Practical Reason.* It is the latter which gives us his theory of Ethics. The student should read for himself *Kant's Theory of Ethics* in the excellent translation made by Dr. T. K. Abbott, and not be content with the following notes, which are too brief to do more than suggest the main line of Kant's thought.

Kant was confronted with the fact, which is apparent to all, that men act from very limited and self-centred motives. Two questions obtrude themselves: " Why do they act at all ?" and " Why are their motives so frequently open to question ?"

In answer to the first question, Kant replies that action is taken in obedience to " a categorical imperative," a phrase which has come to stay. There is an inherent impulse towards moral development. We cannot but act. Where are we to look for the guiding principle of action ? The answer is in the will. Will does not mean, with Kant, the individual will represented by a particular act of choice, but the underlying impulse which, like reason, is expressed indeed in the individual choice, but is itself universal. Taking this view of the situation Kant declares: " There is nothing good (without qualification) but the good will." It is a mistake, therefore, to divorce the end of any action from the inner will to act, and elevate an external circumstance into the position of a ground of action. Our responsibility resides in the fact that we should direct our will aright. But direction relates to the minor premiss which is taken up into the will, and from which our conclusion or action is derived. Unfortunately, we take up bad maxims into the will, and consequently our conduct is reprehensible. Though men have reason as the mainspring of all their investigations, they reason wrongly on

particular issues. Though men have will as the ground of moral action, they exercise their wills in a mistaken and wrong way. To correct this tendency we can supply ourselves with a maxim that will act as a standard for any determination, and a guide where determinations have to be made. "Act only on that principle which you can, at the same time, will to become a universal law." The student will perceive here again the attempt to grapple with the Sophist position. Kant explicitly declares that "the categorical imperative" is concerned not with the *content*, but with the *form* of our line of action. The remarks already made on the usual charge of "abstraction" apply here.

A more serious criticism is found in what has been described as "the rigorism" of Kant. In a rather severe reaction from the Pietistic school, he allowed very little place for the emotional life. Instead of seeking a harmony of feeling and will, he tended to place the two in opposition, and to adopt to some extent the Stoic attitude of repression. The expression "taking up bad maxims into the will," like the psychological method of "trial and error," is a description and not an explanation. The question "Why does man go wrong?" waits solution. We require some control of "the content" as well as of "the form" in the moral law. This is the final problem of Rationalistic Ethics. Yet we must all feel grateful for the surprising advance that has been made in obedience to these principles.

B. Well-being as the Moral Standard

Attention will be directed in this section to (i) The pure "Hedonistic" school, (ii) The Utilitarians.

(i) Hedonism is associated with the Epicurean school, and has experienced development by later writers. All types of this ethical theory claim that the pursuit of pleasure and, negatively, the avoidance of pain, constitute the chief end of human life. Psychological Hedonism asserts that as a matter of simple observation men make pleasure their ultimate aim. "Ethical" Hedonism builds on this alleged fact the further consideration that all men ought to seek pleasure, and that this principle forms the standard by which actions must be judged as "right" or "wrong." According to the "pure" Hedonists, man's predominating interest is the pur-

suit of his own individual well-being. (It is well to point out that neither "well-being" nor "happiness" convey in their modern English connotation the precise meaning of the Greek εὐδαιμονία.) Those who maintain this position uncompromisingly are known as Egoistic Hedonists. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed a growing interest in social well-being as distinct from the well-being of the individual. Those who concerned themselves with this new phase are known as Utilitarians.

Egoistic Hedonism lays down that every man should seek a maximum of well-being or pleasurable experience for himself. Very early in the discussion, however, varieties in the character of pleasurable experience begin to manifest themselves. Should a man seek pleasure at the cost of loss and suffering to others? Here the Hedonists divided. Some were disposed to say that such "pleasure" was not "true" pleasure. Others like Hobbes brought in by an unconscious subreption the idea of "interest." Man denied himself such pleasurable experiences because of the reaction of others. There was "a social compact" by which men surrendered some of their pursuits for the sake of living peaceably with their neighbours. Again, it was pointed out that "pleasure" is transient. Should a man seek intense excitation, which from its nature must be brief, or a condition less fraught with enjoyment at any given moment, but more uniform in its placid contentment throughout the duration of the experience? The Epicureans supported the latter view, and found the true end of pleasure in a condition of ataraxy—*i.e.*, indifference to exacting sensuous appeals.

Again, it is objected that pleasure results from the satisfaction of a particular urge, and that it is illogical to make a secondary experience primary. A man does not eat food for pleasure, but because he is hungry. Having experienced pleasure in eating, he may eat again to secure a recurrence of that experience, but he must satisfy the urge in the first instance before he can obtain the consciousness of pleasure. Desire conditions pleasure, not pleasure desire. Three problems confront the Egoistic Hedonist: (1) Pleasures cannot be classified as to quantity or quality, and yet they vary in both directions, offering no real criterion for choice. (2) Pleasures conflict with the pleasures of others, and even with one another in the case of the individual, requiring

a qualifying principle of self-interest to determine the choice. (3) Pleasures are a derived and not an immediate spring of action. They imply either a previous experience which suggests their pursuit, or a motive or urge which seeks satisfaction in an individual who experiences pleasure when the urge is satisfied—*e.g.*, if we were constituted differently, biologically our pleasures would be different.

(ii) *Utilitarianism* (*or Universalistic Hedonism*).—A later school of Hedonistic writers perceived at least some of the difficulties which confront an uncompromising application of the idea of individual happiness as the final explanation of ethical action. They endeavour to find a more comprehensive base by defining conduct as good or bad in accordance with the tendency of action to promote or to detract from " the greatest possible well-being of the greatest possible number." This is the formula of Bentham, and breathes in itself a very lofty spirit. The Utilitarians did much good. The formula is expressed by John Stuart Mill as follows: " The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the 'greatest happiness' principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure."

There are several criticisms that can be levelled against this form of presentation. Notwithstanding the effort to give the final reference a universal character, the system labours under the same disadvantages as *Egoistic Hedonism*. Pleasure is individual in its very nature, and the vague use of such terms as " good " and " happiness " only conceals, but does not destroy, this feature. We all rank " pleasure " differently. The literary gentleman has little satisfaction in witnessing the rough buffoonery of an uneducated peasant. The peasant has a contempt for the poor moon-struck poet, and so on. So that what is " pleasure " to one set of individuals is bad and " pain " to another set. J. S. Mill recognised this, and sought to supplement the popular doctrine of pleasure as an end, by introducing nobility of mind as a qualifying determination. But apart from the question whether such a grading of endeavour is not really a departure from his professed foundation principle, there is no standard by which " noble "

pleasures may be put into comparison with "base" pleasures. Attention has already been directed to the difficulties connected with the duration of pleasures which attaches to both wings of the theory under consideration. When we come to consider the social order, difficulties multiply. The welfare of the individual is bound up with the group, and the intricacies of the relations make it difficult to be sure what is for the universal good, if we guide ourselves wholly by the standard of pleasure. It does not follow that the greatest possible pleasure of the community is the simple aggregate of all the individual pleasures. In fact the idea speedily becomes absurd. It is not by any means clear that pleasure is the *only* desirable thing. On the contrary, as we have seen, the pursuit and acquisition of *other* desirable things bring pleasure. The paradox of Hedonism still operates: "The proper way to secure pleasure is not to seek it." A sense of well-being is the result of a process directed towards the end, but is not the end itself. The explanation of pleasure always lies in something outside itself. People always ask, "Did you enjoy that?" never, "Are you enjoying?" The qualifying word "yourself," which is added to the latter question, introduces a being with aptitudes and desires.

C. Evolutionary Perfection as the Standard

A much more ambitious scheme of moral development is associated with the name of Herbert Spencer. Charles Darwin created a new world for the scientists of his day. Whether his discoveries are as original as some contend, or whether they have collected various tendencies in scientific thought and given them at once popularity and completeness, need not detain us. Ever since his time the word "evolution" has tended to harden into a concept of gradual continuous development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. It seems only natural that the principles which were employed to explain the diversity of the physical world should be extended into the moral sphere. Herbert Spencer essayed this great task, and his work has attained a well-deserved recognition as a serious attempt to classify and explain moral characteristics. It is necessary to warn the student again, however, that description is not explanation, nor is "sequence" always to

be equated with "cause." Many writers on evolutionary Ethics fall into the logical fallacy, *post hoc, ergo propter hoc.* They read a real or fancied moral succession in the history of tribes and nations, and conclude without further examination that the principle of rational development from embryonic morality to the stature of the moral man is inherent in the succession itself. Herbert Spencer, being a master, tried to avoid this fallacy in its most glaring forms, but it is open to question if he succeeded in escaping from its more subtle approaches. The question he set himself was to determine the essential element in moral progress. He, of course, assumes that there is such a thing as progress. The standard fixed is that of "self-realisation"—*i.e.*, the highest development open to the individual during and within that section of the process which belongs to him in the wide movement by which the race is gradually approximating to the ideal. Matthew Arnold gave popularity to these discussions by coining the phrase "A stream or tendency making for righteousness."

Evolutionary Ethics has become very popular, and we constantly read criticisms to the effect that certain presentations ignore the enormous changes introduced by the theory of evolution. We need to be on our guard against such generalisations. There is no such thing as "the theory of evolution." There are several theories. Apart from this obvious reflection we need to remind ourselves that evolution is a process, and not a solvent of ultimate problems. One immediate difficulty is the attempt to equate the merely sentient with the self-conscious. Ethics as it develops in mankind is related to the voluntary decisions of self-determinant beings who are conscious of an end present to them. It is this element which gives moral content to an action. Such mental reactions have a physical base, and are closely connected with natural appetites which we share in common with the beasts. But the similarities ought not to blind us to the differences. An appetite is not in itself moral or non-moral. It is a function similar on its physical side to the motions of the heart or the secretion of bile. We pity a jaundiced patient, but we reprobate "a jaundiced mind," because the element of self-determination is absent from the former, and constitutes the latter. The gulf between function and the conscious direction of function has not been bridged.

An interesting and yet simple illustration of one form of the difficulty is found in the fact that domestic animals lose some of their native capacities. The caged bird will die of starvation if released. It has lost the power of foraging, and is at a disadvantage compared with the wild members of its species. The domestic horse travels more rapidly, but has not the same sense of avoiding obstructions, and will more readily crash into a fence or tree. There is a difference between reason and what we call instinct. In moral questions, this difference is all-important. Again, it has been urged, with reason, that a haze hangs over the beginning and the end of the evolutionary system. Man's origins are very obscure, and recent research has not tended wholly in the direction of establishing a slow, gradual progression in which the race shares. Someone described uniformitarian evolutionists as "millionaires on the bank of time." They solve everything by the happy phrase "a remote antiquity." But outside the range of history that is merely a phrase, and offers no illumination of an impenetrable darkness. Is the present savage, as Max Müller contends, a reject of civilisation, driven by the pressure of development to the circumference of the human circle? How can we explain the fact that certain races have shown extraordinary capacities for development and that, of these, some have developed in accordance with these capacities while others have failed to progress? Max Müller's theory seems to offer a partial explanation, but it does not account for the fact that the assumed arrested development is not permanent. The savage responds to the stimulus brought to him by an external civilisation. Nor does the theory throw much light upon static civilisations where a certain progress has been registered and a complete stop seems to have been put to further endeavour. Mohammedanism was powerful and progressive as long as it was waging relentless war against the infidel. When it attained a position of stability with large territories in which it was autonomous it failed to progress. In the judgment of many observers, there has been noticeable retrogression until recent stimuli from without have roused it from a long slumber.

Not only are man's origins obscure, and the evidence of progress so complicated as to refuse to yield to a simple law of development persisting with uniform power

throughout the history of mankind, but the apex of man's development lies completely out of sight in this theory. What is really meant by "the wider development" of the race, and how can the concept be made concrete enough to affect a man's daily conduct? If, as some maintain, the end of all human endeavour is to be a little colony of men reduced by physical disabilities to eking out a primitive existence in some huts on the Equator, to what purpose is this wider expansion, even if it could be given concretion? It has been said that it does not aid to right conduct to know that "Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be." It can scarcely be said to thrill us if we add, "and finally ceases to be," by a process of retrogression which brings him back to the spear and blubber of the Esquimaux, after electric light and hot and cold water had been laid on.

It may be conceded that evolutionary Ethics does help us in supplying a relative moral standard. It emphasises what every ethical system should acknowledge, that conduct is relatively good when it tends to bring an individual into greater conformity with his particular environment. Everything which explains our achievements, and relates our present condition to an earlier stage, exhibiting the moral value of the later experience, is helpful to human progress. But the call to man to adjust himself to better conditions is meaningless, unless it carries with it the idea that such adjustment is with a view to an ultimate worthy end which is better still. That is the only meaning the word "progress" can hold. It is just this final worthy end which "biological" thinking in Ethics fails to define for us. What is the conduct of the future super-man likely to be? Present political developments are making many very uneasy in the face of this question. It seems as if scientific developments cannot be depended upon to ensure a corresponding moral growth. Knowledge can to a large extent be divorced from conduct. It seems to be the plain truth that man, if left to his own unaided thought, is at rock-bottom as barbaric as ever he was. Moral evolution is a great reality, but the secret of development must be sought elsewhere than in a uniformitarian process conditioned by the natural processes which form part, or are assumed to form part, of the struggle for existence.

CHAPTER XII

RESIDUAL PROBLEMS

IN THE FOREGOING chapters the aim has been to indicate the findings of Natural Ethics, and to supply some criticisms that may prove useful. As yet we have not considered the distinctive claims of the Christian revelation, and have merely indicated here and there that it supplied an answer to some vexed questions. Before proceeding to deal in detail with specific Christian teaching, a few general observations may be appended to this first section dealing with problems that emerge in our study, and have not as yet received definite treatment. One of these is concerned with the question *To what extent does the moral standard bear authority, and what is the nature of the authority it bears?*

A. EXTENT AND NATURE OF AUTHORITY

Granted that man has a moral side to his nature, what is the relation of this moral side to other characteristics of which he may be possessed? There can be but one answer to this question. Nothing that comes within the wide range of conscious experience, and that can be the foundation of an act of will, lies outside the scope of the moral imperative. Involuntary movements may be excepted from the control of moral authority—a weak heart is not an infallible sign of moral degeneracy. But anything on which the individual exercises choice cannot lie beyond the range of such determinations. The New Testament injunction is literally applicable, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Claim is laid to the loyalty of the whole man in every action which he performs. As we have already seen, the various theories of obligation ultimately seem to come under one of the following categories. The moral law can be regarded—

(i) As a law imposed on man from without, such as the law of God, of Nature, or of the State, or

(ii) As a law of reason or conscience, or

(iii) As a set of principles leading to an end such as well-being or evolutionary perfection.

Now, however much the desire may be present to avoid placing the individual in a position of subjection over against an external law or principle, there is always a tendency to adopt this strictly legal outlook in dealing with the moral imperative. Men regulate their conduct by sanctions, and introduce various forms of taboo, which coerce the individual into conformity. The demands made by the standard are totalitarian, but the standard is conceived as operating upon the individual from the outside. But this external aspect of the moral law is not its final or best explanation. Indeed, it may be urged that the idea of an external legislation contains in it an element of contradiction. The person who yields to law because of force or superstition has not been fully possessed by the law to which he yields. Submission to authority without the inner consent of reason is always an inadequate submission, however difficult it may be to attain to the higher ideal. It is for this reason that some writers give to conscience the place of binding authority. "Your obligation to obey this law is its being a law of your nature. That your conscience approves of, and attests to, such a course of action is itself alone an obligation. Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide" (Butler).

Kant's "categorical imperative" puts moral reason in the same place of authority. The tendency of all thought is to move from the idea of simple laws, accompanied by sanctions imposed on the individual and compelling his obedience, to the more complex conception of an inner determination embodying the true nature of the individual, *e.g.* the conception of the categorical imperative. This finds acute expression when the individual asserts the rights of conscience against a powerful sanction in the State. The martyr illustrates the force of the categorical imperative.

At first sight it may seem that the process outlined is one in which authority is weakened—*e.g.*, the law of the despot in classical times might seem more binding and efficient than the categorical imperative of Kant. Rightly understood, however, the influence of an inner law is ultimately more persuasive and efficient than the external

laws of an autocrat. The distinction between the subjective and objective now disappears. The law is the man. It is in this matter of authority that the full force of the Christian claims are clearly seen. The Christian is not left to serve the demands of an external law imposed by the Divine fiat. He possesses the law of liberty and freedom through the operation of the Divine Spirit within him, bringing his members into conformity with the law of Christ. There is within him enabling grace and power harmonising with the will of God as it is revealed in His Word.

B. Application of the Standards

A second question relates to *the application of the standards to everyday life.* It has often been contended that the general teaching of the leaders of ethical thought has been theoretical rather than practical. Yet from the time of Aristotle " the world we live in " has been before the mind of ethical teachers. Here two influences may be seen at work. The old idea of a legal imposition external to the individual has given rise to an elaborate system of casuistry worked out in minute detail by the Jesuits. Here elaborate rules have been devised to meet every possible contingency, regulating the interaction of various ethical principles in any real or assumed conflict of loyalties. The ordinary man is advised to place himself under the guidance of a spiritual director who becomes the keeper of his conscience. Conformity consists in following advice, and responsibility is shared, if not shirked, by the system of spiritual direction. The Utilitarians would contend that the aim of Ethics is essentially practical, but would rely rather upon the creation of what may be called " a public conscience " than on the concentrated study of assumed experts. They would encourage a policy of *laissez faire* in this as in other departments of human activity, trusting to the interaction of various interests and ideals to mark out ultimately the paths of general happiness.

It may be that some extreme Intuitionists would oppose the view that moral direction must come either through experts or through the general consciousness of the community, and hold that Ethics simply determines the right or wrong of individual actions, and is strictly normative. Its only influence on everyday life would be the tendency

it created to cause the individual to abstain from the repetition of actions which his conscience had condemned. But the general trend of Intuitionism and any system of Rational Ethics would be away from the idea of setting forth a hard set of unalterable rules, and still more away from the idea of a choice of alternatives. The prevailing conception would be in favour of a practical expression of the normative principle determined by the individual in relation to the special circumstances of any given moment. The determination may prove faulty, but the obligation to determine action in accord with the best available knowledge always abides. Any stereotyped set of rules based on external authority is calculated to hinder the expression of the free spirit, which is the true condition of progress. The underlying confidence in the uprising of the Eternal Consciousness, even in the partial decisions of men, is the real source of ethical hope.

Here, again, Christianity approaches most nearly to the theory of Rational Ethics operative since the days of Plato and Aristotle, but, in providing a synthesis between the merely normative, in the sense of the purely formal, and the practical, it offers to the individual something unique. It holds up a concrete life, the life of Christ, as a Personal norm. He is the standard. Such a conception cannot be otherwise than essentially practical. The true Ethics is lived in human experience, and exerts a formative influence on everyday life. Conditions, indeed, vary greatly, and the complexities of our modern civilisation bring ever new and perplexing problems before the Christian. But the blameless One always suggests by His very passage through our world that the perplexities are there to be solved, and that the solution is found in relation to Him. Practical Ethics receives a powerful incentive in the contemplation of the holy Son of God, separate from sinners, yet living among men. But there can be no surrender in whole or part of the individual's responsibility. The voice of Christ must sound in the soul, and there must be personal surrender to His claims. The advice of others may be sought, and that has become part of God's gracious discipline in our lives, but no "expert" can decide the momentous question, "Lord! what wilt Thou have me to do?" Like Saul we may be told what is required by the voice of another, but we can only effect a true moral decision by

recognising the information as a message coming from the Lord to our own souls. The sacredness of individual relations with the Lord must be preserved.

C. Conflict of Loyalties

But when the notion of an external system of casuistry is thus disposed of, there still remains the problem of a possible *conflict of loyalties*. Many examples could be given of complex situations which may confront a man, in which his loyalty to one person or cause may make it difficult for him to carry out his duty to another. The most of these conflicts have been classified under the title "Cases of Conscience," and have given rise to the question as to the lawfulness of Amphibology—*i.e.*, using words in a double sense, the speaker having one meaning, and the hearer being led by the nature of the conversation to adopt another. Here also is found room for questions in Equivocation, where the truth is concealed under an ambiguous expression.

One of the commonest illustrations relates to the universal obligation to tell the truth. Should a homicidal maniac be informed that the object of his insane hate is in a certain room, if a lie would divert him from his purpose? Should a doctor tell the truth regarding a particular complaint, if he fears that to tell the whole truth might have a fatal result in the case of certain types of nervous disease? The Intuitionists generally, and especially Kant, are disposed to deny that there can be such a thing as a conflict of loyalties. There is one imperative duty, and a man must follow it. Any special provision made for complex situations is foreign to the direct simplicity of the categorical imperative. Members of other schools are prepared to recognise that principles require modification in certain circumstances.

A good deal of the difficulty arises from *taking an obligation in too isolated a form*. The law conceived as rigid is set over against the particular case or fact also conceived as rigid. The truth is that moral issues consist in the relation of the fact and circumstances in accordance with a determination of the self. The danger of self-deception is proportionately greater where interest may be enlisted on the side of departure from strict truth, or any other modification of the normal

ethical attitude. But while this danger has to be kept in mind, it must not be allowed to obscure wholly the fact that particular circumstances create a fresh moral situation —a madman, for example, has no real sense of values, and must be treated as a madman. Strange as it may appear, people can tell the truth unethically. They can use a fact to wound unnecessarily those against whom they have a grudge, and can boast that they only told the truth to them, or of them. Hence it appears as a sound principle in "cases of conscience" to say that we cannot isolate any particular item of the complex of moral relations, and determine our action solely by it. We have to place all the elements that make up the complex in due proportion, and form a moral judgment in relation to the whole, governing ourselves by reference to the two great moral obligations of premier authority—viz., duty towards God, and duty towards our neighbour.

The Christian here also holds a clue to the synthesis of differing views. He is clearly reminded that frequently he will be in a position of difficulty. He is warned of the opposition to be expected from the world-system, the spiritual adversary, and his "old nature." He is taught that his duty towards God must take priority over all else (and this duty includes and enhances his duty to his neighbour). He is instructed that if he "walks in the Spirit" many of the conflicts need not arise, and in cases where decision is difficult, he is invited to cast his burden on the Lord in full assurance that if he acts as God guides, God Himself will undertake for him in relation to the apparent consequences. Sometimes when the Christian takes the courageous line and follows truth at great hazard, the dreaded possibilities are averted. The Christian can only estimate the right, he cannot allow possibilities to divert him.

D. Casuistry

Attention has already been directed to the question of casuistry, and some strictures have been passed on what travels under the name of "Moral Theology" in the approved system developed by Alphonsus de Liguori and also the early Jesuits. But the subject is sufficiently important to invite a closer examination, though, as else-

where, the student is advised to supplement the brief notes here supplied by reference to some accredited text-books.

The word "casuistry" may be defined technically as "a case of conscience, when conscience is in a strait between two or more courses." It is obvious that in this wide use of the term it is not possible at all times to dispense with casuistry. It is held by some writers to include "accommodation," which may be defined as the attempt to communicate knowledge in a manner suited to the intelligence of the learner. Like the word "casuistry," the word "*accommodation*" has taken to itself various shades of meaning. It may mean only the use of parable, metaphor and illustration. The familiar methods which are adopted to make technical studies attractive and intelligible to children and non-expert adults illustrate this phase. But "accommodation" passed from that unexceptionable phase to the position where portions of truth were withheld as unsuited to the hearers. It has been suggested that in this aspect Christianity has been influenced by the "mystery" religions, which had so great a vogue in the early centuries of our era.

Here a danger develops which requires to be watched with great care. To withhold a deeper aspect of truth may not involve any trifling with moral principles. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But it becomes easy on an assumed application of the principle of "accommodation" to suppress truth. The difference is very subtle, and yet the moral gulf between the two attitudes is vast. The communication of knowledge suitable to the mental condition of the recipient that can become the means of further advance and of deeper comprehension of reality is highly commendable. The communication of knowledge under the pretence of "accommodation" that hinders natural progress, that conveys false impressions, or that creates a mental conflict when the larger truth is apprehended, is psychologically indefensible and morally inadmissible.

Casuistry, in its broad general sense, would attempt to answer the question: Is this particular case of accommodation an example of tempering truth to the capacity of the individual, and so forming a condition for advance into further truth, or is it a case of concealing truth and hindering progress? But it goes further than this, and, still adhering to

the broad acceptance of the term, passes into judgments on particular ethical cases where there are arguments presented for different lines of conduct—*e.g.*: Should a Christian support vivisection? Ought the principle which condemns cruelty to animals to compel us to adopt a strictly vegetarian diet? It passes beyond that to the consideration of peculiar and special cases, raising such problems as, "Is truth always obligatory?"

It seems as if, in this broad sense of the word, a certain amount of casuistry is inevitable if we are to apply ethical principles to particular instances. Casuistry in Ethics corresponds to the "distinctions" that are so frequent in Scholastic logic by which the minor premiss is distinguished from one very like it, and thus a particular conclusion is not forced upon the investigator or arguer. It seems wisest to acknowledge that in many particulars there are problems that beset the individual and the community, problems in which he is justified in seeking sound advice from those of greater experience or of wider knowledge.

But two important considerations seem to be necessary if the real validity of ethical action is to be upheld.

(i) There is but one right course ideally in every set of circumstances. Consequently our aim should not be to provide ourselves with safe alternatives, but to find out what is the good and true way. Our business is to find out the will of God. A particular judgment may be mistaken, and advancing knowledge, especially in moral relations, may exhibit our mistake to us, but at the moment of action (if our judgment is to possess ethical value) it must present itself as the will of God for us. There can be no suggestion of an "either—or" in our decision. Discussion is a weighing of probabilities and considerations, but no such element should enter into the decision, which is a clear determination to carry out the Divine purpose as we see it. As Green puts it: "There is no such thing really as a conflict of duties. A man's duty under any particular set of circumstances is always one, though the conditions of the case may be so complicated and obscure as to make it difficult to decide what the duty really is" (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book IV, c. ii, sec. 324).

(ii) The decision cannot be mediated to us by a system or by a consensus of experts. It must be our own. We

are not called upon to implement an external law, but to do the will of God from the heart. Consequently we cannot shift our moral responsibility. Our actions must be our response to God's will as seen by us.

Thus we must make a distinction between "advice" and "direction." Advice is a useful guide to which we must have recourse in cases of difficulty. "Direction" is a positive instruction requiring us to take some action on the authority of another, who may claim superior knowledge or an official position as the ground of his assumed authority. Such a submission is the negation of moral conduct.

Casuistry in the Narrower Sense.—But there has grown up, within even the circles influenced by the Christian revelation, a narrower, and very misleading, application of the word "casuistry." This narrower view has as its base the idea that morality consists in obedience to a series of systematic prescriptions. The law of conduct is presented as an external command couched in general terms, under which the particular instance may be brought in a manner similar to that which has been stated above in relation to the scholastic application of formal logic. Each one of these prescriptions is regarded as determinant, apart from the question of their embodiment of a simple ideal which lies behind them all and is the ruling determination of which they are but expressions. There stands beside the moral subject, as it were, a series of injunctions each of them universal and obligatory: "A man should tell the truth at all times." "A man should preserve life at all times." "A man should remain honest at all times," etc. Each one of these has universal moral force. But any one in given circumstances may conflict with another—"If I tell the truth I destroy a life," "If I remain honest I perish with hunger," "If I preserve life I cannot be honest" —phrases which are frequently translated by "business is business."

Three conceptions appeared to govern the development of this type of casuistry: (*a*) The law is an external authority imposed as a general rule of conduct to which men must conform. (*b*) The law must be interpreted in the light of "special cases," and can be modified in obedience to peculiar circumstances. (*c*) There is a maximum and a minimum observance. The former is the prerogative of the saints, and involves "ascetical" perfection. The

latter is the line beyond which it is not safe to venture lest the penalty of " mortal sin " be incurred.

The Jesuits are closely associated in the popular mind with this ingenious system, although it has received its final form, with the approval of the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, in the writings of Alphonsus de Liguori. The reason for giving this prominence to Liguori (who founded the congregation of " our Most Blessed Redeemer " in 1732, commonly known as the " Redemptionists ") is that he was pronounced Venerable nine years after his death, which occurred in 1787, was Beatified in 1816, Canonised in 1839, and elevated to the position of Doctor of the Church in 1871. He must, therefore, be taken as a fair example of authoritative casuistry as it is expounded in the Roman Catholic Church. The student who is accustomed to the high ethical standard of modern authorship will probably feel some measure of surprise at finding that a distinguished exponent of Moral Philosophy whose works, we are told, contain in them nothing worthy of censure, and whose opinions " should be followed and reduced to practice, all doubt whatever being thrown aside," is nevertheless so careless in his quotations that a favourable critic has to warn his readers that they must not use this author's *Glories of Mary* in controversy. For " to name but one, and that not the chief cause of this unfitness, it is only necessary to mention that St. Alphonsus did not scruple to make most important additions to the passages which he quoted from the Fathers; and this, though perfectly allowable in a book of meditations, of course destroys its value as a work of authority in matters of controversy " (*The Rambler*, November, 1854).

But the system adopted by Liguori had been previously developed by a number of Jesuit writers, amongst whom may be named Molina (1535-1600), Mendoza (1589-1669), and Busenbaum (1600-1668).

It is in the development of the three characteristics noted above that the system of casuistry has invited the just condemnation of all who are really interested in the progress of high and pure morality. No doubt, such modern advocates of the Jesuit system as Professor G. H. Joyce, S.J., M.A., will find reasons to dispute this attitude, and he has done his utmost to reconcile the system with accepted morality in his interesting article on " probabilism " in

Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, which, although short, should certainly be consulted by the reader. But the judgment of students of Ethics generally is still against the system. Professor Joyce tells us that "probabilism" means "the moral system according to which, when there are divergent views as to the lawfulness of an action, for each of which solid arguments may be advanced, then, provided the lawfulness be alone in question, we are under no obligation to follow the more probable of the two views, but are equally free to adopt either course." If it be urged (as Professor Joyce evidently thinks it may be urged) that such reasoning does not place us under obligation to choose the best, which alone can be right, he answers: "A man is not bound to adopt the more perfect course in all his actions, and the attempt to impose what is most perfect as a matter of obligation always results at last in the total rejection of the moral law, as being too burdensome for flesh and blood. It seems necessary to call attention to this point, as probabilism has often been attacked on the ground that it proposes a low standard of perfection. The fact is that it is in no way concerned with perfection. The study of Christian perfection belongs to ascetical theology." Professor Joyce admits that Pascal's criticism, which he regards as a "mordant caricature of probabilism," influenced opinion against their view for one hundred years, but notices that in the nineteenth century there has been a definite return to it amongst Roman Catholic writers. The defence urged by Professor Joyce appears as a condemnation of the system to all who favour any measure of rigorism. Obviously conformity to an external code, and not the attainment of the highest moral ideal, forms the root principle of a system which denies any obligation to secure moral perfection. Obviously, also, there is presupposed a system of maximum and minimum observance. The maximum is relegated to another sphere, that of Ascetical Theology.

There remains for consideration the other point that the law must be interpreted in the light of "special cases." It is here that Pascal is certainly mordant, though his accusations can scarcely be called "a caricature" in view of the strong language of Peter Dens, who claimed that "probabilism" introduced into Christianity horrid monsters of doctrine, making lawful parricides, adulteries, perjuries, etc.

One quotation must suffice: "'No doubt, doctors are often

of different sentiments, but what signifies that? Each renders his own opinion probable and safe.' . . . 'But, father,' I remarked, 'a person must be sadly embarrassed in choosing between them!' 'Not at all,' he rejoined, 'he has only to follow the opinion which suits him best.' 'What if the other is more probable?' 'It does not signify.' 'And if the other is safer?' 'It does not signify,' repeated the monk; 'this is made quite plain by Emmanuel Sa of our Society, in his Aphorisms: "A person may do what he considers allowable according to a probable opinion, though the contrary may be the safer one." The opinion of a single grave doctor is all that is requisite.' . . . 'Well, reverend father,' said I, 'you have given us sinners room enough at all events! Thanks to your probable opinions we have liberty of conscience with a vengeance! But are your casuists allowed the same latitude in giving your responses?' 'Oh yes,' said he, 'we answer just as we please, or rather, I should say, just as it may please those who ask our advice.' . . . 'Well, seriously, father,' I said, 'your doctrine is an uncommonly agreeable one! Only think of being allowed to answer "Yes" or "No," just as you please! It is impossible to prize such a privilege too highly. I see now the advantage of the conflicting opinions of your doctors. One of them is always ready to serve your purpose, and the other never gives you any annoyance. If you do not find your account on the one side, you fall back on the other, and always land in perfect safety.' 'That is quite true,' he replied, 'and accordingly we may always say with Diana, on finding that Father Bauny was on his side, while Father Lugo was against him, "Often when one God presses hard, another God brings help."' "

Serious objections have been urged against the whole system, and have not been met by its defenders. Three factors are supposed to be present in a defective moral action: (1) Transgression of the law. The matter must be grave in itself or in the circumstances, to constitute a grievous or "mortal" sin. (2) Full regard to the grave, evil quality of the act. (3) Full consent of the will. Where these factors are present in a lesser degree the sin is only "venial." Right living is thus decomposed into a series of isolated acts. The unity of the personality plays little, if any, part in the determination. In relation to inadvert-

ence, which is supposed to exonerate the transgressor, sufficient attention is not given to the fact that inadvertence may be due to persistence in evil. Pascal here criticises the Jesuit system on the ground that it confuses " ignorance of the fact " with " ignorance of the right." " All wicked men," says Aristotle, " are ignorant of what they ought to do and what they ought to avoid; and it is this very ignorance which makes them wicked and vicious." The same difficulty attaches to theories of the consent of the will. Suppose the will happens to be depraved. There would not be full regard to the evil of the action and, therefore, not full consent in the manner demanded. The man who sins and repents, the " intemperate " man of the Aristotelian System, might claim that there was not full consent of the will in his actions. He approved the better while doing the worse.

A direct criticism, which depends on the underlying philosophy of the system, is that this type of casuistry is fitted to encourage and develop self-sophistication of a dangerous kind. James reminds us that " consent to the idea's undivided presence, this is effort's sole achievement. . . . The idea to be consented to must be kept from flickering and going out. It must be held steadily before the mind until it *fills* the mind. . . . Where, however, the right conception is an anti-impulsive one, the whole intellectual ingenuity of the man usually goes to work to crowd it out of sight, and to find for the emergency names by the help of which the dispositions of the moment may sound sanctified, and sloth or passion may reign unchecked."

It is scarcely too much to say that Jesuit casuistry is a classification of excuses. It weakens the aspiration to a noble ideal by fortifying the impulses against it. It is difficult to tell the truth. There may be a few occasions when a serious " conflict of loyalties " may make the telling of the truth a matter of extreme difficulty. But it is a fatal way of helping the soul to a right decision in an emergency of this sort to keep ever before the mind an interesting set of conundrums coming under the heading, " When is the truth not the truth, or when is a lie not a lie, or how near can we come to the border-line without crossing it?" The following illustrations from Liguori's *Moral Theology* will help to make this criticism clear: " It is certain that it is no grave thing to fail in keeping a small part of what you

have sworn; for example, if you have sworn not to drink wine, you commit no mortal sin by drinking a little, because the smallness of the *matter* is an excuse" (Lib. iv, Tract 2, Dub. v, 173). (The word "matter" is italicised in the translation to show that it is here used in Liguori's technical sense.) "Is it allowable to swear something false, adding in a low tone a true circumstance? 'Yes,' answer Hurtado and Prado with others quoted by the Salamanca doctors against Torre. They say it is enough to make the speech true that there should be some external conformity with the concept of the mind, whether shown by a nod or by a whisper, and the other not hearing it is an accident. But the Salamanca doctors admit it in better sort, if by any means the whisper can be perceived by the other it is admissible though the meaning is not perceived; but not so if it is altogether hidden from the other" (*Ibid.*, 168).

Pascal comments on this as follows: "And he suggests a still surer method for avoiding falsehood, which is this: After saying aloud, 'I swear that I have not done that,' to add in a low voice, 'today,' or after saying aloud, 'I swear,' to interpose in a whisper, 'that I say,' and then continue aloud, 'that I have done that.' This you perceive is telling the truth. 'I grant it,' said I; 'it might possibly, however, be found to be telling the truth in a low key, and falsehood in a loud one'" (Letter IX).

An amusing instance of great assistance to diners-out may be added. If an invited guest is asked if the food is good, which may be in truth tasteless, he can reply it is good—that is, for mortification (*Ibid.*, 160).

Strange as it may appear, even Liguori's great laxity does not cover the whole range of possible equivocation. He tells us: "A man who came from a place falsely deemed infected may deny that he has come from it—that is, as pestilential, for that is in the mind of the guards. Nay, Toletus, Lessius and many others quoted by Sporer admit this, even if he has passed quickly through an infected place, in such a manner as to be certain that having averted danger from himself he has contracted nothing, because it can be understood he has not come from there so that danger might be feared from him, but I am not able altogether to agree in this" (*Ibid.*, 159).

One more instance must suffice: "Even if legitimately and judicially interrogated you are not bound to give evidence

in the following cases: (1) If you know the matter from confession. . . . (3) If from the testimony notable harm threatens you or yours, unless indeed public or private harm may strongly result to a stranger, as Cardinal de Lugo notes. Hence, generally you are not bound to witness against relatives. . . . (6) If the other probably did not sin in what he did, either on account of ignorance or because he took something in secret compensation for a debt on account of which nevertheless he is charged as a thief. The reason is because it is the mind of the judge to inquire concerning crime" (*Ibid.*, Bk. V, cap. iii, 268).

It is impossible to regard such ingenious excuses as legitimate examples of a conflict of duties. They appear in all their nakedness as excuses for a low morality. So far Professor Joyce must be regarded as speaking correctly. The commonsense of mankind rejects such subtleties. While these objections are levelled against the system, it must be confessed that Jesuit morality is not wholly responsible for all such forms of self-deception. Many who have little sympathy with the legalised code of moral subtleties that is served up in the name of "Moral Theology," nevertheless practise a similar type of casuistry, and we all need to be on our guard against it. Self-sophistication is a fruitful source of evil. We excuse our conduct under the plea of special circumstances or peculiar emergencies. In any supposed "conflict of loyalties" we need to inquire closely as to whether we are not allowing a sectional and individual reference to cloud our minds to a more comprehensive and possibly universal significance contained in the precise question under discussion. It is just here that Hedonistic and Utilitarian theories tend to break down.

No system of evaluation can be secured that would make the happiness of the individual, purely on the basis of happiness, something that should be subordinated to the higher interest of the whole. The reason for this is that happiness considered as an emotional feeling is purely individualistic, and though we speak of collective happiness we are really trenching on the realm of metaphor when we do so. Mill, indeed, tried to propound a theory that would remove this objection. "Each person's happiness is a good to that person and the general happiness, therefore, is a good to the aggregate of all persons." But in order to establish his posi-

tion, Mill had to introduce a sense of dignity. It has often been pointed out that Mill confuses desire or a desirable state of consciousness with a special kind of feeling. How then can the difficulty be overcome? Only by recognising that there is a definite end which may on occasion conflict with my immediate pleasure, but we are confronted with the difficulty that this end is not sought impartially by all men. Irrationality obtrudes itself. Even when we approve the best, we do not choose it.

It is here that the Christian system demonstrates its superiority. Our weakness has not been left without a guide, nor do we have a guide merely, but an enabling Spirit, Who overcomes our natural weakness. To assist us there is one perfect and acceptable will of God, which is plain in all the great matters fundamental to morality. This will of God has a very definite relation to the whole of our lives. Where His will is clearly revealed there is no question of greater or less importance. We should take the example of our Lord, Who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work." Once we ascertain the plainly revealed will of God in the Scriptures, we have but one duty, to obey. Should the consequences appear disastrous, we should cast our care upon the Lord; in matters which give rise to conflict (these are comparatively few, and in most of them there is discoverable a selfish interest: when this is eliminated the conflict no longer appears) we have the assurance that the Spirit of God has been given to us to enable us to apply the principles of the Divine command. If there is an earnest desire to follow the Lord, even our mistakes will be overruled in His gracious providence.

It is quite evident that in any case of conflict, while advice and discussion may be helpful, the ultimate decision rests with the individual, and any system of casuistry that diminishes the sense of individual responsibility in these critical cases is to be denied a place in sound Ethics. The reason why the individual element enters so largely into cases usually grouped under casuistry is that they constitute exceptions to a general rule, and these exceptions, if they are to be justified at all, must be justified by the particular relation which the individual sustains to the other members of society. The nerve of the problem lies in determining this particular relation, and no rules as such

can properly be framed to determine the exact nature of the exception. We throw back the individual upon the great fundamental laws revealed in God's Word, and place on him the responsibility of deciding whether in the particular circumstances which emerge in a sinful world, rather than avoid the apparent breaking of a usual obligation, he should fulfil the higher law of love. Again, it needs to be emphasised that the cultivation of a right attitude of soul towards God, and continual dependence on the guidance and enabling of the Spirit, is the true quarter from which a solution of acute problems must be sought. The exceptions are rare, and in such instances we may well believe that the soul in true harmony with the Divine would receive a right impulse and determine correctly. Too much stress may readily be laid on individual aberrations of this sort, occasioned by unusual circumstances, and the mind of the individual may thus be drawn aside from the paramount duty of daily fulfilling the will of God. The tendency to seize on excuses that will bolster up selfish and unworthy instincts is too great, in our imperfect condition, to admit of any studying ways of escape from the ordinary dictates of reason and Scripture.

In discussing this matter, MacKenzie very properly observes: "It is bad enough that we should require particular rules of conduct at all, but rules for the breaking of rules would be quite intolerable. They would become so complicated that it would be impossible to follow them out; and any such attempt would almost inevitably lead in practice to a system by which men might justify, to their own satisfaction, any action whatever. The way to escape from the limitations of the commandments is not to make other commandments more minute and subtle, but rather to fall back upon the great fundamental law, of which the particular commandments are but fragmentary aspects. . . . When these rules come into conflict, and when we feel ourselves in a difficulty with regard to the course which we ought to pursue—when, in short, a 'case of conscience' arises—we must fall back upon the supreme commandment and ask ourselves: Is the course which we think of pursuing the one that is most conducive to the realisation of the rule of reason in the world?" MacKenzie adds: "A man who keeps his conscience unclouded, and sets this question fairly before himself, will be able to keep himself practically

clear from errors, without resorting to casuistical distinctions."

We would only add that the man who steeps himself in the will of God is in the highest degree in that condition of clear conscience which Natural Ethics demands as the solution to the problem.

E. The Problem of Determinism and Freedom in Relation to Responsibility

Much confusion has arisen by the varying definitions given alike to the words " determinism " and " freedom," and the student needs to tread warily because of these differing definitions. Is the problem of freedom important? Two reasons suggest that it is. (*a*) If the end is not attainable, and within the range of practical politics, the urge to attempt to attain it tends to become dissipated by an increasing consciousness of inability, and (*b*) if a man is not free to seek any particular end, the word " ought " in Ethics is robbed of its meaning.

Freedom seems a necessary element in moral responsibility because we understand by the term a relation between the agent and his deeds, which means that he can be praised or blamed for them. We do not condemn the individual for involuntary actions. The motions of the heart, or the various gland secretions, as such, lie outside the range of ethical judgments. It seems a commonplace, therefore, to regard moral responsibility as having its response in the will of the individual. Will implies a certain power of choice. *In what sense is man free?* It becomes necessary at this stage to distinguish between metaphysical freedom and ethical freedom. A man may be metaphysically free, and ethically bound. He may be the victim of a character which is set on evil, so that his unfettered choice supplies evidence of this bondage. At the time of choosing, a man is conscious of freedom—that is to say, he recognises that his act is the response of his own nature, and that he is not driven by any external constraint. This is what is meant by the common phrase " the consent of the will." If there is not this internal harmony with the end proposed, the action is constrained.

Schiller criticises Kant's theory in relation to the rigorous exclusion of self-interest in the well-known lines:

" Willingly serve I my friends,
But do it, alas, with affection.
Hence I am plagued with a doubt,
Virtue I have not attained."

Of course it is generally recognised that this criticism of Schiller has in it something of the nature of a caricature, but it contains this element of truth recognised by Kant himself, that while we cannot associate mere pleasantness with the conception of duty, nevertheless there is within ourselves a feeling of the sublimity of our own destiny, which attracts us more than any beauty, so that Kant is able to say: " Cheerfulness of heart in the performance of one's duty (not pleasantness in the recognition of it) is a mark of the genuineness of a virtuous disposition."

Any sense of constraint, whether it be a feeling of slavish subordination to an external moral command, or the recognition of a force compelling us to do other than our conscience dictates, disturbs this inner harmony and mars our sense of freedom. So Aristotle regards the truly virtuous man as the happiest, by virtue of this same inner self-contentment. Attacks upon freedom have been made along many lines. It has been argued, *e.g.*, that man's acts are largely determined by his circumstances. This is one of those superficial criticisms that demands close analysis before the true answer can be discovered. Circumstances, by the etymology of the word, mean the things that stand round men, and it is a false antithesis to separate man from his circumstances. Circumstances are of two kinds, internal and external, and in Ethics neither of them can be separated from the reaction of the personality. An argument of this kind invites us to return to the old Psychology that regarded the will as passive, driven by external motives, here called circumstances, the stronger of which must inevitably prevail. We now know that the rules of impulses are conditioned by the reaction of the individual. The strength of the motive depends upon the measure of attention of him who is the subject of it, and not in any inherent driving power in the motive itself. According, therefore, as a man's circumstances are taken as including his character and disposition, or excluding them (the latter position regarding circumstances as so many external possibilities of action), the statement becomes true or false. But if circumstances are taken to include character, the

proposition amounts to the truism that " a man acts as he acts." It is a common experience that a man rises superior to circumstances when these are conceived in the external manner indicated above. It is also a common experience that " A " may rise superior to circumstances, while " B " is entirely defeated by them. The difference is obviously in A and B, and not in the external conditions which are the occasion, but not the full cause of the reaction.

Some years ago the following problem was propounded in a religious paper. A is jealous of B. As a result of his jealousy he formulates false charges against B. B is dismissed from his employment as a result of the false charges. He takes to drink and dies a drunkard's death. A is stricken with remorse because of the awful consequences of his malignity. He repents and becomes a useful church member. The question was then asked, Is this just? Should B suffer eternal loss through A's malignity, while A on account of repentance goes cheerfully to heaven? It is interesting conundrums of this kind that reveal the weakness in the theory that man's acts are largely determined by his circumstances, in the general acceptance of that term. Everybody who is dismissed unjustly does not take to drink, nor does everybody repent who sees the tragedy of a display of malignity. The explanation of A's repentance and of B's debauchery goes deeper than the external circumstances, and this affords an answer to the objection, which must be regarded as superficial.

While we are unable, therefore, to acquiesce in any suggestion that the full explanation of a man's actions may be found in external circumstances, and must consider the reaction of the individual as an important contributory cause, such action containing elements not found in any particular collection of external events, we must avoid the other error, that a man can act without true motives. This is sometimes expressed in the misleading phrase " Freedom means power to the contrary." The idea underlying this suggestion is that two courses of action, or a course of action and inaction, lie before the individual. On each occasion of such a presentation, the choice of the individual, and it only, determines the reaction. Such choice is ultimate, and we can seek no cause beyond it. It is a mere truism to say that the choice of the individual determines the action, but it is not correct to assume that such choice cannot have a

previous moral history. *E.g.*, when a person loves, it is not true to experience to say that the possibility of hatred, or any determination in that direction, lies firmly before the mind. It would be less true to state that the individual stands in a neutral attitude to such a determination. It would be rejected with horror. To suggest that our actions are uncontrolled by motives would be to place man on the level of acting from blind impulse, or, in the alternative, exercising a capacity of making unreasoned choice. Many persons are led to accept this view, and to make will an independent faculty that can turn in any direction, because of their interest in moral freedom. They are under the impression that to suggest a controlling influence is to imply constraint. But when the matter is considered carefully, it will be seen that a wholly unconsidered action, if reason be included in the element of constraint, would be a wholly irrational action, and irrationality is the antithesis of freedom. It is unhappily true that the will of man is frequently directed by impulses, and is more frequently determined by habits, and sometimes neither of these can be justified rationally. But *true freedom in the ethical sense consists in the capacity to estimate ends, and to disregard an immediate pleasure, or profit, in view of the end which is sought.*

James reminds us, "When any strong emotional state whatever is upon us, the tendency is for no images but such as are congruous with it to come up. If others by chance offer themselves, they are instantly smothered and crowded out. . . . The cooling advice which we get from others when the fever-fit is on us is the most jarring and exasperating thing in life. Reply we cannot, so we get angry; for by a sort of self-preserving instinct which our passion has, it feels that these chill objects, if they once but gain a lodgment, will work and work until they have frozen the very vital spark from out of all our mood and brought our airy castles in ruin to the ground. Such is the inevitable effect of reasonable ideas over others—*if they can once get a quiet hearing*; and passion's cue accordingly is always and everywhere to prevent their still small voice from being heard at all."

If this be true, and it can hardly be disputed, then the regulation of the mind by the continual assimilation of sound ideas, those quiet messengers which passion seeks to exclude, is a matter of great importance in the direction

of choice. Motives, as we saw previously, become important when they are related to a certain universe of being. Mill's sense of dignity, the schoolboy's notion of form, the gentleman's conception of honour, all take their place in an ordered scheme of life, in which each of them stands related to a determined course of conduct, issuing in a particular result. The individual instances are related to this particular scheme, and our action regarding them is determined along the lines of training as well as experience. Man is therefore free when he acts according to the dictates of his character. He lives habitually within a particular universe of thought, and it is that fact that enables others as well as himself very frequently to anticipate his reaction. Everybody is conscious of this when they say: "I cannot possibly do this or that." They do not mean that they are physically restricted, they do not even suggest that the possibility of the choice they repudiate is not present in their consciousness. What they do mean is that their whole mode of life, their formed concepts of duty, their ideals and ambitions, erect barriers against a particular choice that cannot be broken down. Freedom does not operate in a vacuum. We are free when we express ourselves, but we ourselves, thus expressed, are the result of training, habit, environment, and a personal reaction, which partly conditions, and is partly conditioned by, the other elements.

It must be borne in mind that the matrix in which the character is formed is itself prepared by a series of acts of choice. But this reflection must further be countered by the complementary observation that the influence of heredity precludes us from regarding the individual as a mere unformed character. There are influences from the past that operate to determine choice. We are here touching the great problem of the relation of the individual to the whole of humanity, which will come up for very detailed treatment when we have considered the Scriptural doctrine of the Fall in relation to Ethics.

F. Is Determinism Important in Relation to Ethics?

We must be careful to define our terms before an answer is returned to this question. In 1754 Jonathan Edwards, in his valuable *Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern*

Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, helped to clarify the issue by distinguishing between co-action and necessity. By *co-action* he understood some external force operating on the individual, and determining his choice with direct reference to his personality. In certain modern views of Psychology known as Behaviourism, this particular form of determinism emerges again. According to that theory, which found a distinguished advocate in Dr. Watson, the explanation of our consciousness is found in the particular nature of our gland secretions, and the influence of continued action creating habits. Dr. Watson does not hesitate to maintain that thought is simply suppressed speech. Those who are curious to read further in this matter can secure the discussion between Watson and McDougall on these points.

By *necessity,* however, Edwards understood the reaction of the individual to impulses and arguments conceived as extraneous to this reaction, which he regarded as properly determined by the character of the individual in question. In this sense, determinism is of importance to Ethics. The impulsion of responsibility is an argument for determinism or necessity in the latter sense. It is only right to attribute blame if a man ought to have acted in a certain manner. The " ought " implies that there is some obligation upon him to determine his conduct according to this standard. Those who are rightly anxious to maintain the true freedom of the will sometimes fail to realise that an impulse that has no history, and a response which is wholly unpredictable, would present something of the character of the irrational. The preceding distinction of our motive and choice may illustrate this fact.

Edwards, in returning an answer to the question, What determines the will? replied, " It is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the will." The words " as it stands in the view of the mind " need some measure of elaboration. Why should a certain motive—*e.g.*, an overwhelming desire to drink a glass of beer—stand in the view of the mind in opposition to, and as more radically determinant than, the desire for sobriety, which, in certain circumstances, is imperilled by yielding to this impulse? The answer to this question is found in the fact that the moral life consists

in the formation of character. As we have already seen, our choice in any case does not leave us in the same position as before. Not only does it result in an individual act which strengthens a particular tendency or impulse, but it creates a predisposition, because of this strengthening, to pursue the same line of determination when similar impulses present themselves. It is thus that what we have called the universe formed by character has been created. The mind naturally seeks a harmony, and this harmony is secured for the moment by yielding to the present impulse, that seems to offer an immediate good. But the will, unrestricted, recognises not only from experience, but from the moral precepts of the race, that the immediate good is frequently deceptive. Hence moral precepts call to the soul to halt; if an arrest can be achieved, then the determination will be otherwise, different impulses are released, and they stand in relation to a wider harmony than that which is secured by the satisfaction of an immediate desire. It is thus that moral vision inhibits hasty action by revealing perils and dangers that confront the actor, and making room for the appeal of higher motives. The tendency in a formed character is to seek for this wider uniformity, and it is for this reason that morality is a code of development, each achievement offering a wider horizon to the individual who seeks after the highest good. But it is impossible with this view to exclude the idea of determinism. It would reduce our whole inner life to a series of unrelated actions, and it would be impossible to determine the relative value of motives.

For the Christian, there is something better than the mere effort of human attainment directed towards a great ideal. There lies behind his actions the consciousness of the sovereign will of God. He recognises that the best can only be attained in harmony with Him Who is the Author and Finisher of the ethical course. This deep conviction of an intimate relation with a personal God Who is, in the language of the scholastics, the "*Ens Entium*," " the Being of Beings," " the Alpha and Omega " of all activity, leads him to ask whether God has not revealed Himself, and, if it may be so expressed, outlined that course for humanity which shall lead it to the eternal goal. He answers his own question in the affirmative, and determines himself by that external standard of reference which is the rescript

of the mind of the Eternal. And there is a further consciousness, that not only is the highest good thus indicated by a message from the Divine Source of all good, but that there is an intimate communion wrought by the Holy Spirit, in which the seeking soul is brought into immediate contact with Him Who has revealed His holy will.

It is sometimes contended that such a view of a Divine Sovereign Who issues His commands brings us back into the region in which obedience to particular laws is the test of morality. We are told by ethical students that this submission to a formal code belongs to an early stage in moral development, and easily degenerates into a mere satisfaction with certain external ceremonies and the performance of specified rites, thus divorcing religion, and as far as possible morality, from the ordinary affairs of life. It has been pointed out with great truth that the poorer the actual moral content of a system, the more assiduous are its devotees in the performance of conventional obligations. From this it is argued that we are returning to a lower stage of ethical development when we urge obedience to a mandate such as "Thus saith the Lord."

No doubt this contention would be true, and find abundant confirmation in experience, if the example and command supplied by the Scriptures is conceived in an external form; if the response is dictated by the idea that there is "a God" outside me, who must at all hazards be kept quiet. It is not denied that it is possible so to conceive the commands. But it is not necessary so to conceive them.

We can take an analogy from human example. The force of a pure moral life consists in the fact that it rouses emulation. Spinoza defines emulation as "the desire of something, engendered in us by our conception that others have the same desire." This is true as far as it goes, but it omits certain elements. There is always the assumption that the feat which is presented to the mind is feasible. There is no sentiment of emulation awakened by the fact that a man is tall, because we recognise that our height is fixed by conditions beyond our control. James would put emulation very early in the experience of the child, and make it one of the primitive instincts of our social life. Butler defines the more developed sense as "the desire and hope of equality with, or superiority over, others with whom we compare ourselves." Taking all

these factors into consideration, we may say that a pure and lovely example stirs us by a desire for equality with the person affording us the example. The desire is based on the consciousness that we can strive to attain what is set before us.

The consciousness that we might attain to any achievement which quickens our instinct of emulation becomes in the moral sphere a sense of obligation to attain this end.

If we apply this principle to the commands of God, we are relieved of the sense of imposition of law as something that terminates in the "Other," conceived as a benevolent or vengeful Being, and in substitution for this conception we have a consciousness that the "high and holy One" manifests in His character and in His revelation those lineaments which we should trace in ours. The command becomes the ideal, and we are constrained to reproach ourselves for unattainment because it shows us that which, but for some destructive influence in our lives, we could be, and that which we are assured we ought to be.

The Divine Sovereignty appears in the character of "Perfect Freedom." Here is a moral power displayed in its purity without any constraint from the sordid or the base. Two feelings are awakened in the mind. We long to be possessed of these gracious characteristics—as St. Paul expresses it, "With the mind I serve the law of God." We are conscious of our lack of attainment, and of our lack of power: "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind." Yet the continual presentation of that which is holy and just and good, while it fills us with profound dissatisfaction, acts as a spur to urge us on the heavenly path.

This union of ideals, if the expression be permitted, does not of itself effect the real deliverance that we seek. Indeed, through the obscuration wrought by sin, what Kant would call "taking the evil maxim into the will," the ideal itself is distorted and degraded, and it requires Divine renewal to apprehend it with any degree of clarity. But there is opened to the Christian not only the pure law which stirs his emulation, but the Divine power of the Holy Ghost effecting a close union between the soul and God. It is thus that the identity which removes the sense of imposition from without is not only recognised by the mind, but is in measure accomplished in experience, until God has com-

pleted His work, making us wholly renewed in body and soul after the image of Him Who created us. This is not a concept in the mind only. It is an operation on heart and life wrought for our salvation. This element in Christian Ethics transcends all other philosophies. It is a direct corollary from revelation, as well as a direct message to the soul contained in the revelation which has been given. The service of God is aptly described as "perfect freedom" because it offers a release from the self-centred ego which might otherwise dominate us. The relation between "the self" and "the Other" finds its fullest completion in a common relation to Him Who is Lord of all. The very universality of the Christian appeal resolves the antithesis. It may be contended that such is not yet the experience, even of the true Christian, and this may be at once conceded. But, in this particular, we are in no worse state than any other system of Ethics that is called upon to consider vice as well as virtue. We are in no worse position theoretically, and we can claim to be in possession of a higher dynamic practically. "Christianity is a gospel of God (even as an ethical system), not the product of man's working or thinking, but an offer of life impinging on man for acceptance. Christian moral experience, then, takes for granted the Holy Spirit of God uniting His help to our weakness . . . the Spirit is not an alien power, but the very substratum of the human personality. . . . Conscience and freedom were emotionally reconciled, the one enlightened as to its true function, the other set free to carry out its real purpose. The two great questions, 'What must I do to be saved?' and 'What ought I to do after I am saved?' are now answered. The Holy Spirit does not disregard conscience, but, on the contrary, enthrones it" ("Ethics and Morality [Christian]," Hastings, *E.R.E.*, vol. v, pp. 469-470).

G. The Bearing of Eschatology on Ethics

Christianity not only sets before us an ideal, and creates in us "a new heart and a right spirit," it assures us that the ideal will one day be realised in "a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." It attests this message of a final consummation by offering as historic fact the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus

Christ. It regards Him as containing in His Person the guarantee of this final realisation. He is the Forerunner of all His people, and that to which He has attained must ultimately become theirs through the intimate union between Him and them effected by the Holy Spirit. Further, it sets before us the salvation of the world as the grand climax of the Lord's conflict with the powers of evil. " God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." The salvation of the world does not mean, and certainly does not imply by any logical necessity, the salvation of every individual in the world. The discussion of this topic belongs more strictly to theology proper, but this safeguarding clause must here be inserted to avoid ambiguity. The Christian system represents our Lord as taking to Himself His power and reigning, coming again in Person to this earth where formerly He suffered, and judging the world He died to save. These elements are important because they relate the strivings and hopes of man to historic circumstances exhibited in the past, and base, upon these sure grounds, hope for the future. Two questions of great ethical importance emerge in relation to the Christian presentation. The kingdom of God, thus definitely established and possessing external evidence, is presented as a kingdom in which rewards and punishments are meted out to men, and by its very character asserts the reality of the hope of immortality.

With reference to rewards and punishments, a good deal of opposition to the idea is displayed at the present time. We are told by many that " virtue is its own reward." Men are found stating that they, for their part, do not require the stimulus of a reward to do good, nor are they intimidated by any threat of punishment. With singular inconsistency, this particular view is urged by those who trace all Ethics to a source in pleasure or the avoidance of pain. It is argued that children should not be given prizes, but encouraged to work for the mere love of learning. Elaborate systems are developed for arresting the child's attention, and creating an inherent interest in the task assigned by the mentor. There is here a very great confusion due to our limited and isolated manner of regarding matters. The reward is regarded as " A," a book or a toy; lawyers would call it " an exhibit." The task is regarded

as " B," a presumably distasteful occupation, which is a means to the end " A." But when we observe our own experience, and the experience of others, we discover that this method of regard is mistaken. There is some necessity for stimulating the interest of children by the presentation of an outside object as a goal for an endeavour which has only a remote connection with the object sought. Just as at a lower stage of ethical development law appears as an external command, and it is only by obedience to law that we gradually realise that it is the expression of our truer self, so the child fails frequently to grasp the real value of an exercise, and requires some external stimulus.

It is doubtful if all the fine-spun theories that seek to avoid this stage in education have the value which some attach to them. It is questionable if the antithesis between virtue and reward conceived in the manner indicated is ever wholly resolved in our present imperfect ethical state. Still, notwithstanding this remaining imperfection, the mature mind apprehends a gradual approximation to the ideal that " virtue is its own reward." What Mill called " a sense of dignity " and what others describe as " self-respect " illustrates this approximation. The securing of an inner harmony of soul is a desired end achieved through a certain course of conduct, and these two coalesce. The conduct is not a distasteful " B," and the inner harmony a wholly distinct " A." On the contrary, the conduct is the means, and the only means, by which this particular condition of soul can be realised. Yet the two can be distinguished. In fact the course of conduct may not be in itself wholly pleasant. The urge to pursue it resides in the desire for inner harmony which cannot be attained otherwise. In the higher pursuits, while what we may describe as extraneous and collateral benefits are not wholly absent, the supreme satisfaction tends to reside more and more in the course pursued and the inevitable consequence of the pursuit. A man seeks scholarship, it may be because it offers an open door to a lucrative and profitable employment. But rapidly he becomes possessed of his quest, and loves learning for learning's sake. Finally he would choose at least comparative poverty rather than surrender the fascination of seeking fresh light along the line of his favourite study. When the matter is examined closely, it appears doubtful if the reward " A " can ever be wholly dissociated,

as a completely separate end, from the occupation " B " of our illustration.

It would not be possible apparently to bind even children to an utterly uncongenial employment by the lure of a reward. There is some undefined connection reached, through the instinct of emulation or ambition, between the task and the external prize. As we advance in knowledge the tie between the task and its issue must become more clearly defined. Hence " reward " becomes more and more identified with the course which the individual pursues, and is but the natural and inevitable end of his conduct. Yet it is an " end," and as such distinguished from the " means." Punishment is the inevitable resultant of failure and lack of co-ordination, the uneasiness of a disordered state of mind being the precursor to a disintegration that is final and painful. St. Paul expresses this idea when he speaks of the man " who by patient continuance in well-doing seeks for glory, and honour, and immortality," receiving " eternal life," and the opposite character who does not obey the truth being the object of " indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." He contends that this is due to the fact that " there is no respect of persons with God." This is but another way of stating that there is an inevitableness in the process. The character must correspond to the activity, and the final phase of character constitutes the reward or the punishment. As Augustine put it tersely, "*Pœna peccati peccatum*," " The punishment of sinning is sin."

And when we add to this analysis the conception of man dwelling in a social organism, the rather cheap assertion that " virtue is its own reward " (in any other sense than that which regards it as leading inevitably to a particular end, which can be conceived as desirable, and therefore pictured as a premium on conduct) looks perilously like a claim to self-centred action which ignores or despises the effect of our conduct upon our fellow-men. It is not always the phrases that sound most lofty that are in reality filled with the richest moral content.

A similar line of reflection may help us to place in its true relation the hope of immortality. Green wrote: " If there is a progress in the history of men it must be towards an end consisting in a state of being which is not itself a series in time, but is both comprehended eternally in the

eternal mind, and is intrinsically, or in itself, eternal . . . a capacity consisting in a self-conscious personality cannot be supposed to pass away" (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, 4th edit., p. 224). Yet it is sometimes contended today that men would choose good as good, even though they had clearly before their minds a final condition in which all man's little efforts would have vanished as completely as "the baseless fabric of a vision."

Again the same assumed elevation of character is postulated for the adherents of a nihilistic creed. "What does it matter," say they, "even though the last man lives precariously in a snow hut on the Equator, and all morality has at last concentrated itself into the urgent necessity of keeping himself warm?—our business is to make life tolerable for existent man, and to that we address ourselves." We are reminded of Hume's shrewd observation that such an apparently unselfish aspiration "admits of no answer, but produces no conviction." And on reflection we dare even to assert that Hume was mistaken in the first section of his pungent sentence. If the idea of a total extinction of the human race without hope of revival or survival in another state were kept steadily before the mind, it would enervate all moral action. The commonest excuse for recklessness is, "It will be all the same in a hundred years." The man who holds intellectually that he is a mere collection of carbon and gases like Conan Doyle's irascible genius, Professor Challenger, acts morally because of an innate tendency to attain a better condition of self-hood. His instinct is in conflict with his induction from the assumed facts of nature, and his instinct wins. Despair is mercifully a rare experience amongst men. When despair settles with its cold chill upon the spirit, moral activity comes to an abrupt end. Even "the passionate atheism of Lucretius" postulates what may be called a limited immortality, if the paradox may be pardoned. So long as a man experiences pleasure, so long he wishes (having been born) to continue in life. The Epicurean freedom from desire fascinates him, and he craves a continuance of that condition. He seeks to escape the haunting dread of an ultimate end by hurling defiance at death. Man is an ephemeral combination of atoms, yet peace of mind makes him earnestly yearn for a continuance of his ephemeral existence. To this extent the Philosophy of the ancient sceptic marches abreast

with the Philosophy of the nineteenth-century moralist. But Lucretius is at least consistent enough to deny all purpose, and regard the world as " a fortuitous concourse of atoms."

Kant argued explicitly that a duty of seeking the highest good compelled us to postulate God, freedom and immortality as " conditions necessary thereto " (*Theory of Ethics*, Abbott's trans., pp. 240-241).

SECTION C. THE DISTINCTIVE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

CHAPTER XIII

CHRISTIANITY AS A LIFE SYSTEM

IN THE PRECEDING portion of our book we have examined the various systems of Natural Ethics, occasionally showing how they come into relation to the distinctively Christian ethical system. It needs to be emphasised continually that this relation is in no sense accidental. Natural Ethics deals with the self-conscious being called man, and any operation of God which is presupposed in Christian Ethics deals with the same being. It is natural, therefore, that certain elements, by no means inconsiderable, will be common to both systems. It can also be seen, and we hope the preceding discussion has made it plain, that (however diverse ethical systems may appear in their formulation and results), just because they have a common material — the self-conscious being — as their base, there are elements of correspondence in every one of them.

It would be a mistake, therefore, to regard Natural Ethics as unworthy of study. A further feature needs to be considered in this connection. Christian Ethics deals with man as he is and as he was. Any redemptive measure must begin by finding some affinity with existing circumstances and moral ideals, otherwise, so far as we can see, it would be incapable of effecting a response in the heart of man. To this extent, at all events, we can cordially endorse the conception of the Greek fathers, most fully elaborated by Clement of Alexandria. They saw in the ancient world, and particularly in Greek Ethics and Philosophy, a real preparation for the coming of Christ, and we should regard the movement in the same light. It has often come with surprise to those who are familiar only with the Calvin of tradition, who taught "total depravity," to discover that it is from his pen that we have the following words: "Whenever, therefore, we meet with heathen writers, let us learn from that light of truth which is admirably displayed in

their works, that the human mind, fallen as it is, and corrupted from its integrity, is yet invested and adorned by God with excellent talents. If we believe that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we shall neither reject nor despise the truth itself, wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to insult the Spirit of God: for the gifts of the Spirit cannot be undervalued without offering contempt and reproach to the Spirit Himself. Now shall we deny the light of truth to the ancient lawyers, who have delivered such just principles of civil order and polity? Shall we say that the philosophers were blind in their exquisite contemplation and in their scientific description of nature? Shall we say that those who by the art of logic have taught us to speak in a manner consistent with reason were destitute of understanding themselves? Shall we accuse them of insanity who by the study of medicine have been exercising their industry for our advantage? What shall we say of all the mathematics? Shall we esteem them the delirious ravings of madmen? On the contrary, we shall not be able even to read the writings of the ancients on these subjects without great admiration; we shall admire them, because we shall be constrained to acknowledge them to be truly excellent. And shall we esteem anything laudable or excellent which we do not recognise as proceeding from God? Let us then be ashamed of such great ingratitude, which was not to be charged on the heathen poets, who confessed that philosophy and legislation and useful arts were the inventions of their gods . . . let us learn from such examples how many good qualities the Lord hath left to the nature of man, since it has been despoiled of what is truly good" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Bk. II, chapter ii, sec. 15).

It will be seen from this extract that the popular view of total depravity is as erroneous as most popular views on any subject. At present we instance the passage to guard the student against the danger of ignoring all research which is not directly based upon the Scriptures, where the subject-matter with which the Scriptures deal is the same as the subject-matter of human investigation. Whether it be nature or man, there are bound to be affinities of treatment, and we can learn valuable lessons from even heathen research into the mysteries of the world or the mysteries of our inner nature.

Having said so much, it is necessary to point out that there is another side to the question. We should be disposed to accept this immediately, once the concept of revelation takes firm possession of our minds. It seems natural to suggest that if God found it necessary to reveal His will, it was because of some obscurity in the human search after Himself. The danger that confronts the Christian frequently today is the tendency to accept the dicta of ethical students in preference to the declaration of God's will revealed in His Word. This danger is reenforced rather than removed by the fact that in many systems there is a very large influence from Christian custom and the Christian revelation. While we are thankful for this feature and, of course, assent to the propositions deduced from such influence, we must be on our guard against accepting the lower principle, however valuable, when the higher is within our reach.

Natural Ethics can deal with man only as it finds him, and has a tendency to assume that the highest attainment actually achieved is the highest possible, or at least contains the full potentialities that condition any further advance. Consequently, Natural Ethics is limited by the activities of mankind and considers only man's highest good. The good that he seeks terminates upon himself and is solely for his own enjoyment, even though the cruder positions that identify good and pleasure are rejected in favour of some higher principle of the human soul. It is strange that men who have been trained for generations in the idea of God as the supreme good ignore this idea when considering human development. Here, again, the influence of Christianity makes itself felt, and the good insensibly merges into the idea of an essential relation in which humanity finds its true purpose and fulfilment in communion with God. But, in so far as this aspect is developed, Ethics ceases to be "Natural."

It is because of this limitation in outlook that man's philosophic efforts have not as yet produced anything approaching unity in the matter of standards. It is not too much to say that there is no universally acknowledged standard of reference. Perhaps the nearest approach to the Christian system is Rational Ethics, which makes reason dominant, and defines the end as the satisfaction of a self-conscious being. But even here different standards have

been supplied, and once the theory descends to practice there is a very large element of variation in its application. Furthermore, it must not be overlooked that the clearer Rational Ethics, the rigorism of Kant, and the lofty idealism of Green, only became possible after centuries of Christian teaching. When Rosenkranz compared Kant to Jesus Christ, Kant himself repudiated the comparison, and described himself as a poor bungler, seeking to interpret the teaching of our Lord. Others who have been influenced have been less ready to acknowledge the source of their inspiration. In the ancient world, even in the writings of Plato, certain deviations from what are now regarded as the conventions of our civilisation are not only tolerated, but taken as a matter of course. The custom which lies at the foundation of Ethics, according to the definition of Aristotle, contained in the ancient world aspects that would fill a Christian with horror and consternation.

We have to regard it as a cardinal defect in Natural Ethics that it reckons without the supernatural. Here, again, it is necessary to pause and to remind the student that in another aspect all self-determination is supernatural. Aristotle criticised Plato because of the third man which he was compelled to introduce into his system. Between the "idea" and its realisation in experience there was always the observer, who witnessed the correspondence as well as exhibited it. It has been pointed out more than once that Aristotle himself does not exclude this suggestion of the third man. There is the custom and its expression in individual life and, besides these two, the appraising self. A similar criticism can be directed against every philosophy. Spinoza's Pantheism breaks down in a precisely similar manner. Apart from the fact that his attributes are attached without any sufficient reason to his eternal Substance, he labours under the disability of postulating a double character for man. Man is at once part of the system, and the explainer of the whole. In the second capacity he fulfils the rôle of the third man of Aristotle. It seems inevitable, therefore, that a self-conscious being must display himself as in some sense outside the order of nature, which he interprets, and in this sense must be supernatural. But what is meant by the supernatural in the present context is the direct intervention of God, guiding and controlling the reason, consciousness and will of man.

This intervention takes upon it two characters. It is a revelation of the Divine will; a call to man, "This is the way, walk ye in it." It is also a message concerning the direct operation of the living Spirit of God, controlling and directing the Christian's conscience, reason and will, and conforming us to the image of Him Who created us in righteousness and true holiness.

Further, Natural Ethics, while it draws upon the example and teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in its best exponents treats the sacred Name with a reverence that some Christians might well emulate, nevertheless pays but scant attention to the life and teaching of Christ, as these portray for us God's great principle of redemption. Natural Ethics, more frequently than not, leaves entirely out of account the redemptive death and resurrection of our Lord. As a consequence of this weakness, the range of Natural Ethics is limited. It is unable to combine fully the external standard of the will of God with that internal response due to the working of the Divine Spirit, bringing the individual into conformity to the will of God, in the first instance by resolving the disharmony between his sinful condition and that pure demand which is embodied in the divine revelation. The good frequently appears as something which is imposed, and we are back in the stage in which external law is the principle of conduct. Custom becomes more largely determinate than it ought to be. There is a missing of the deeper communion between God and the soul, which is achieved through the awakening of conscience by the external standard of God's will revealed in Scripture, but made operative in the individual heart through the internal work of the Holy Spirit. There is, further, not merely this failure to apprehend the initial process, but a loss of the sense of the importance of daily communion wrought by the same Spirit, which is one of the most powerful incentives to true Christian morality.

The Dangers of Natural Ethics

We can illustrate the problem to which expression has been given above, by noticing the effect on mediæval Theology of the prominence of Aristotle's influence. While recognising that here and there Aristotle anticipated some

of the higher conceptions that subsequently influenced Christian thought, we should not be blind to what Neander calls "the shadowed side which we observe generally in the ancient Ethics." Newman Smyth declares: "There is a want of ideality throughout the Nicomachean Ethics; there is little that is aspirant and idealising in these well-rounded classical lines, nothing Gothic in the architecture of the Greek Ethics. It is mundane morality" (*Christian Ethics*, p. 131). We have to complement this severe criticism with Newman Smyth's own quotation from Aristotle's description of the contemplative life: "But such a life would be something higher than the merely human; for one would live thus, not so far forth as he is man, but as there is in him something divine." Nor is he insensible to the beauty of the next passage, to which, indeed, he makes reference, and which we give from Welldon's translation as follows: "Nor is it right to follow the advice of people who say that the thoughts of men should not be too high for humanity or the thoughts of mortals for immortality; for a man as far as in him lies should seek immortality and do all that is in his power to live in accordance with the highest part of his nature, as although that part is insignificant in size, yet in power and honour it is far superior to all the rest. . . . This is the true self of everyone, if a man's true self is his supreme or better part." While such a modification must be admitted, and while admirers of Aristotle would naturally seek to emphasise it, in the main the lower element determined by the historic circumstances of the Greek philosophy prevails. We are justified, therefore, in contending that Newman Smyth is correct when he declares that the "confident exclusiveness of Naturalistic Ethics is an unscientific habit, as it would be unscientific for a chemist to refuse to apply any test by means of which his combinations might be subjected to further analysis, or as it would seem absurd for an investigator to choose to make explorations by moonlight instead of by sunlight . . . man at his highest moral power and in his intensest spiritual consciousness is the ethical fact to be investigated and explained. A satisfactory account of him at a lower moral point is not an account of man at his supreme moral height. A thoroughly scientific Ethics must not only be adequate to the common moral sense of men, but prove true also to the moral consciousness of the Son of Man" (*Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6).

On the whole, we think that the criticism is justified which is made of the mediæval systems. Smyth writes: "Yet the mediæval endeavour to superinduce the religious ideal upon the Aristotelian Ethics discloses not only the clumsiness of the schoolmen, but still more the lack of breadth in the original classic ideal itself. Its ethical basis is not broad enough for the subsequent religious superstructure. A moral ideal which was not co-extensive with the whole spiritual nature of man was taken by the schoolmen from the Aristotelian ethics, and then the so-called religious virtues were more or less cumbrously and precariously built upon it. Supernaturalism in morals was added to the classic naturalism as a divine appendix to Ethics. But Christianity cannot consent to be regarded as an appendix to nature, nor is divine grace an afterthought of the Creator" (*Ibid.*, 133).

There is perhaps no character more variously estimated than Aristotle's. As a philosopher he is sometimes regarded as a pale copy of Plato, while to others he is the supreme philosopher of the ancient world. After Dr. Stirling's justification of him, contained in his Gifford Lectures, *Philosophy and Theology*, Dr. Blackie wrote:

> "Well said and wisely! Who would measure take
> Of his true stature, let him choose the tall;
> We all are kin with giants when we make
> Ourselves the big yokefellows of the small.
>
> "Give me no peeping scientist, if I
> Shall judge God's grandly ordered world aright;
> But give, to plant my cosmic survey high,
> The wisest of wise Greeks, the Stagirite."

There can be no question that with all his limitations, to which reference has been made, Aristotle has influenced most profoundly the whole course of Christian Ethics. Looked upon with great disfavour in the twelfth century, Aristotle again came into prominence through the labours of Albertus Magnus and his distinguished systematising pupil, Thomas Aquinas, and, as we have already seen, was largely drawn upon even in post-Reformation times. While we may treasure the beneficent results of his influence, it is possible also to hold that, through his domination in the schools, non-biblical ideas and conclusions were accepted. Aristotle has been called "the prophet of the natural

man," and the idea certainly grew up that Christianity was no more than an occasional addition to, and a moral accentuation of, views which had been discovered by the natural reason. Something of this idea resides in the oft-quoted lines of Tennyson:

> " Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,
> Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
> We yield all blessing to the name
> Of Him that made them current coin."

No doubt Tennyson had a deeper idea, but occasionally it has been suggested that the distinctive feature in the Christian presentation is freedom from technicality. The great truths inherent in our nature are put in simple form that adapts them to the comprehension of the ordinary man, but their content is thought to be much the same as that which has been expressed by the early philosophers. That this result sometimes followed from a too close attachment to the Greek system can scarcely be denied.

In our modern days this particular tendency exhibits itself in the inclination to cite the authority of our Lord for those beliefs which are the common possession of educated people. The implied suggestion is that Jesus Christ exhibited what we all know and desire. For those who hold this view, His uniqueness lies rather in the realm of practice than in any regenerative element that more fully awakened the slumbering conscience of man. Those who are possessed of this idea deplore more than anything a breach of convention. As a result, the revolutionary statements which emerge in the Christian revelation are practically ignored, or conveniently explained away.

The movement of Humanism which preceded the Reformation, and acted as a stimulus to thought, ultimately fell into this pit. The Humanists pointed out the way to a wider culture, but drew back when the higher moral demands were forced upon their attention. The contrast between Erasmus and Luther is the contrast between a clear-sighted observer and a man possessed of an overmastering enthusiasm. It is not surprising to discover that modern Humanism is following somewhat the same course as that which characterised its predecessor of the sixteenth century. Such words as God, sin and death, if they have not lost their entire significance, have been so modified

as to carry no longer the full value that attached to them in Christian revelation. Humanism, for example, entertains very grave doubt of whether it does not emphatically deny the essential personality of God. Carlyle popularised the eternities and immensities. Although Carlyle is probably now but little read, this vague conception of an eternal something, rather than an eternal " Who," exercises a profound influence in humanistic circles.

Pantheism, in possibly a refined form, has an extraordinary attraction for the modern mind. Sin becomes an essential evil only in the sense of being an element in the progressive evolution of the race, which must be overcome. Men speak of a fall upward, and imagine for themselves a dawning consciousness which revolts against the individual's previous condition, and thus sin is practically equated with dissatisfaction. It was, indeed still is, a problem, but we are assured by some writers that there is something heroic in conceiving ourselves as surviving in the perfected race of the future, and something mean and unworthy in any yearning for personal immortality. It is a strange thing that doctors have a lucrative practice amongst Humanists, which seems to indicate that there is in their breasts also a clinging to individual existence which death threatens. It is impossible in this system to place the righteousness of God over against the unrighteousness of man in marked contrast. This was a conception which lay beyond the range of Greek Ethics, although, as we have seen, Plato and Aristotle occasionally groped after it if haply they might find it. The Word of God has also lost its significance in the completely humanistic system. It is no longer a Divine message coming from the Eternal to man, but a reaching-out on the part of man after those shadowy visions of immortality which haunt him, and yet fail to satisfy. Religion becomes the expression of man's moral consciousness, and experience the only test of its validity.

It is because of this fact that the Humanist frequently appears as very broad-minded. It is unnecessary to assert that Christianity in its true aspect is a deadly foe to intolerance. But we are sometimes in danger of confusing indifference and toleration. It is the man who is profoundly convinced of the truth and uniqueness of the system which he adopts who alone can become truly tolerant. An American humorist during the war gave

expression to this fact when he said: " For myself I am quite impartial. I do not give a dime which of the allies captures the Kaiser." The man who bases his faith on an inner experience, and on that alone, must hold that his faith belongs only to those who may possibly be capable of the same experience. Those who urge against him that they find satisfaction in a different order of religious observance, or a different presentation of the eternal something, stand on impregnable ground. He cannot deny their experience, and they profess to command the same result which his religion imparts. Hence he is bound to admit that their faith possesses for them an equal value to that which his faith possesses for him. It would be impossible to deny the reality of their experience, and improper to call in question the foundations of that which is simply an aspiration after spiritual reality, variously realised in various circumstances and temperaments. James is the prophet of this pure Pragmatism. The good is that which works. It is impossible, strictly, for such a person to be intolerant, because, on the theory, each competing Philosophy has an equal claim to regard. To elevate his own system into an absolute requirement for all men would be to show an intolerance which could only have an emotional and not a rational base. It is possible to be intolerant in this sense, but only at the expense of denying logically the very foundation of the argument.

It is otherwise with those who hold that there is an unalterable standard. The temptation to which men all too frequently yield, to force consent to that which is conceived to be the ultimate truth, is sometimes very great. It is only when we recognise that where God is patient we might well follow in His footsteps, that true toleration emerges. Calvin is credited with having said, though at the moment this particular quotation has not been verified, " If God permits a man to sin, the Church ought not to hinder him." If, indeed, Calvin gave utterance to this sentiment, it must be interpreted in the light of what has been written. Moral judgments cannot be secured by coercion. It is only by the patient inculcation of external truth that man can be brought to a perception of this duty and obligation. The truly tolerant man is he who insists upon the unalterable character of the Divine command, and yet bears with inferior systems rather than

violate the equally imperative enunciation of Scripture, that such commands can be obeyed only from the heart, and remembers that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

In an easy-going age the spurious amiability of Humanism is accepted in lieu of the genuine toleration which the true Christian displays. We need to be on our guard against milder forms of this philosophy. Excuses are made for departures from the Divine law under the pretext that ends can be apprehended differently in different countries and in different circumstances. Indeed, it might be argued with a measure of cogency that casuistry is a disguised form of Humanism, and has arisen from the undoubted divergencies accredited to Naturalistic Ethics. One unalterable law for all men presses heavily upon many social conditions, and as a consequence there is grave danger that some of the essentials of Christian teaching may be ignored.

How Christianity surpasses Natural Ethics

From what has been said it will be at once apparent that the Christian should be very clear in his mind as to the extent to which Christian Ethics surpasses the findings of Philosophy. If he has only a vague idea that things are slightly better as a result of the entrance of the Son of God into human experience, he will not be vigorous in the proclamation of the Divine claims. In the early ages of Christianity the disciples of Christ were confronted with this problem. If they had been willing to allow their system to be regarded as one amongst many, all making a genuine appeal to human thought and experience, and none of them claiming universal allegiance, they might have escaped much cruel persecution. The relation between Church and State in modern times, in which varying interpretations of religious experience, even within the ambit of Christianity, find common expression, tends to produce the same spirit of compromise which was demanded of the early Christians. No particular system of belief is regarded in the popular judgment as paramount. This arises from confusing two facts which have an entirely different origin. The first fact is the right of every individual to a free expression of his conscientious conviction. This must be safeguarded

in any modern State that would escape the charge of returning to the persecuting spirit of the past. The other fact which is not clearly apprehended is that all such interpretations are subject to comparison with an unalterable standard. Because a man is permitted to think as he likes, it does not follow that he thinks correctly. Because of the confusion which has arisen, propagandism is frowned upon in the religious, while it is commended in the secular sphere.

We are in danger of thinking that that which is permitted as reasonably good has no right to be contrasted to its detriment with the best. Hence the outcry against fanaticism and sectarianism, and other terms which are employed to conceal the fact that the individual hesitates to make a decision, and does not condemn the right of anyone to present to him reasonable grounds that might determine his choice. In Ethics, as in other departments in which there is an exercise of reason, the second position cannot be admitted for a moment. We acknowledge quite freely that it is the duty of the state to protect all men in the exercise and propagation of their beliefs, provided that the ordinary principles which govern the integrity of the state are not violated. This is the essence of toleration, and we therefore recognise that opinions as such should not be the object of retributive justice. But it is wholly false to the true ideal of progress to suggest that because men have this liberty, no effort should be made to press upon the individual the all-compelling moral claims of a truly Christian system. Indeed, it will be seen that any such objection contradicts the very principle of individual liberty which has been enunciated. The exercise of a religious cult awakens curiosity, and invites the attention of the non-observer. Its very exercise, therefore, is a form of propagandism. If to this be added the right to make opinions known, then propaganda is an essential feature of the new liberty into which the modern world has entered.

The sole question that remains is, On what ground does the Christian claim that the Ethics which he propounds is of such a character as to require the allegiance of all men? The answer to this question is bound up with the relation of Christian Ethics to Christian Theology. It is impossible to separate these two, because Christian Theology makes imperative claims. If we believe in a real incarnation, and a real historic redemption consequent thereon, we are at

once confronted with the dilemma that either these historic circumstances are non-ethical or that they profoundly affect the whole range of moral experience. There is a revolt in these days against what are rather vaguely called dogmas. The attempt is sometimes made by liberal theologians to introduce a distinction between the teachings of Jesus, and what they would call the later refinements and supplementations of the Epistles. Some have gone so far as to say, Ritschl being a supreme example, that there is nothing metaphysical or theological in the simple words of Jesus. They are altogether ethical and religious. A very common illustration of this mode of thought is found in the distinction made between an image and the shrine in which it is placed. Those who entertain the opinion before us would say that the shrine may change while the image remains the same. All theological systems are enshrinements of some great religious ideal. Our little systems have their day, and then cease to be. The Augsburg Confession, the XXXIX Articles, the Westminster Confession, and, some would say, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, are shrines: the faith is something distinct. They shelter it, but they are not it. Dr. Gresham Machen, in drawing attention to this modern idea, pointed out that the framers of Creeds in the olden days framed them because they believed they were expressing truth. Modern creed-makers—or perhaps we should say modern creed-destroyers, for their making lies still in the future—are content to assert that they are approximating to truth, and that their findings may not only be reversed in the light of growing knowledge, but have been formulated with a view to that reversal. The difficulty here, as in many instances, arises from a failure in accurate definition. An approximation means that which comes nearer to the object in view, and therefore it presupposes, in the case of creeds, an unalterable standard which forms the base of comparison. That modern investigation might issue in a clearer presentation of certain creedal statements is not denied. But if there is approximation, and we are to keep our figure, then every fresh creedal statement is an approach in space to the object, and so the road which has been travelled is clearly marked. There are additions to a truth perceived, but no denial of that truth. But very frequently the modern presentation ignores this distinction. It makes creed-

making something in the nature of an experiment in the dark. We suggest *this* and then we suggest *that*, and the only standard that governs our comparison is the suitability of the suggestion to a particular age or temperament. Thus we are thrown back on the original weakness of Humanism. Our formulations are not even partial descriptions of absolute truth, they are merely records of that which for the time satisfies our inner experience. If there is no progress in theology, then obviously it has little claim to the consideration of thoughtful men. But progress involves definite achievement. It contains the past as a heritage with which we cannot part, while it reaches out to a future of greater possibility. It is not possible, therefore, to discard the great principles of Christian Theology. Certain elements of them enter directly into our system of Ethics. Christian Theology offers this base for the pursuit of the good, that in the Person of Christ there is a union of God and man so complete that in Him the fulness of the Divine ideal is realised, so that He becomes at once the Exemplifier who must be followed, and the Enabler who inspires us to seek after Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Taking this as our starting-point, it is possible to say that Christian Ethics alone offers freedom from the antitheses which perplex, and continue to perplex, all students of Natural Ethics. One problem continually exhibits itself. It is used by Aristotle to show that mere philosophy in itself is not sufficient to ensure right action. "Those who theorise are like people who listen attentively to their doctors, but never do anything that their doctors tell them. Deeds, then, are said to be just and temperate when they are such as a just or temperate person would do, and would do in the spirit of the just and temperate." But the problem here, which has not been solved, is how to secure first of all the spirit that shall lead to just and temperate deeds, and then ensure the continued practice of the virtues which arise from this spirit. The Psalmist of old felt the urgency of this problem when he cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Christianity, with its doctrine of the new birth, offers the solution that the spirit to think and to do always such things as be right is communicated to us through the operation of the Holy Spirit. God, Who is the End, becomes also in our hearts and lives the Beginning, and

ensures the progress which lies between the Beginning and the End.

A second important advantage in the Christian system is that it derives morality from a higher source than human reason. Postulating the fact that in God we live and move and have our being, it declares that conformity to the Divine Image is the highest form of truth and righteousness. Christianity does not displace human reason. It does not invite men to follow blindly an uncomprehended order. On the contrary, it makes its appeal continually to man's natural sense of right and wrong, and even includes in its range the more developed conscience which has resulted from the exercise of reason. But it does not leave us in the ambiguity which besets all systems that seek for the interpretation of true righteousness in the unassisted reason of mankind. It indicates, on the other hand, that we are possessed of this unique faculty because we have been made in the image of God, and holds before us the ideal of a perfected reason, free from the trammels of finiteness, and from any hindering element due to wilfulness and sin. Man's reason, under this stimulus, rises higher and higher, until he comprehends something of the nature of Him Who made him. At the same time, there is the offer of help for man's helplessness and light in man's darkness. God is not only the great exemplifier, He is also presented to us as the Divine Companion and Friend. It is not surprising that, with such a lofty conception, the Christian system has outstripped all rivals in the moral sphere.

It follows from this that the "summum bonum" is not merely an end worthy of man's pursuit. It gains true concretion, it is something that is realisable by man, just because it is perfectly realised in God. Man is lifted to Divine heights. He is bidden to seek the true end of life, not in anything that is transient or merely human, but in that reality which for ever abides, and in which by divine grace he may become a participant. Just because Christianity reveals to us God as energising our powers, the standard of attainment is not presented as something abstract and remote, only a fraction of which is attainable by the ordinary man in everyday life. There is offered to us the idea of "the path of the just, which is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day." Our attainments are, indeed, partial realisations of the ideal

which lies before us, but they contain in them the promise of future perfection.

Again, the Christian system resolves the antithesis that is sometimes painfully apparent between the community and the individual. Rational Ethics tells us that we cannot do good to others without doing good to ourselves, and that we cannot do good to ourselves without doing good to others. It presents us with a morality which is possible only in society. But while Rational Ethics presents this as an ideal which is imperfectly accomplished in the race of men, Christianity goes further, and binds men together in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. It sets before us a revealed will which is the will alike for all men, and while it bids us love our neighbours as ourselves, it finds a solution of the problem raised by the contrast between self-love and benevolence, by inviting each one to lose himself in the love of God. The God of Christianity is a social Being. In the perfection of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not only is individual holiness portrayed, but the character of a united will and purpose, a complete harmony between the Divine Persons in which Each One fulfils His own eternal function in union with the Other Members of the blessed Trinity. It thus carries unity of interest into the very heart of reality, and, by its exhibition of Divine relations, stamps the isolated and selfish life as something unworthy of the truest and the best. But by its doctrine of co-equality of the Persons it safeguards the liberty of the individual, teaching unmistakably that that which curbs a single life, and prevents a full-orbed development, cannot be in accordance with that final order of things where individuality is lost in its narrow and limiting sense, and that personality which is the true expression of the individual life attains completion in the harmony of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Not only so, but in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ there is offered a perfect demonstration of a life lived in human conditions, in true subjection to the supreme will of God. Complete union of the Divine and human in an historic Personality is a demonstration to the struggling sons of men that their nature is adapted for converse with the Divine. It is the answer to all who would suggest that these lofty conceptions are mere dreams that can never be realised. Our Lord Jesus Christ could say, " I do always those things which please Him," and

in this life of complete subjection He realised, as no sin-hindered soul can, that perfect freedom which is the goal after which all Ethics strive. And lest it should be thought that as the Person of its teacher is unique, so the practice of virtue which He illustrated must remain as a feature of His unique Person, Christianity asserts with no uncertain voice that it makes no remote and purely theoretical demand. It asserts the possibility of close union with the Son of God, and it provides what no other system is able to afford, a spiritual stream of pure helpfulness, in the union between the believer and his Lord, mediated by the Holy Spirit, and is as close as the union of the branch and the vine. Jesus Christ is the highest good. We not only strive after His example, but we are closely united with His Person, and in this lies the guarantee that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

In striking contrast to the Greek Rational Ethics, and to its later development in Spinoza, Christianity does not make the distinction which we find in these writers, by which the contemplative life is set over against our other activities, as alone affording us true happiness and full ethical satisfaction. It sets before us the lofty conception that whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we can do all to the glory of God. There is nothing mean or small, there is nothing superior or inferior; all that is true to our nature can be pressed into the Divine service. The English poet Herbert gave simple expression to this great thought when he said: "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws, Makes that and th' action fine." The tendency amongst all students has been to despise the humbler things, and this inclusion of all the various constituents of our personality, and all the conditions of our earthly life in an ethical harmony, creates, where it is acted upon, respect for all men, a recognition of that division of talents concerning which the Master speaks, and a desire to benefit by every contribution, so that our neighbour's interest becomes, in a more real sense than in any philosophical theory, our own.

We saw in our study of Naturalistic Ethics that the problem of repentance remained largely insoluble. How could we regard that which was an inevitable result of the process of trial and error in our human experience as, at the same time, a definite turning away from sin? It seems

as if we had to hold that repentance was imaginary. It was a true revolt, but the element of condemnation which it contained involved the impossible assumption that at a lower stage of development we could apprehend the higher. The Christian system solves this difficulty. It unites man's highest good with the requirements of the Divine Being. It creates within him an urge after holiness, and presents before him a true picture of God's purpose for him, which removes the contradiction between the existent state of man and the nature of God, by laying down the important fact that man as he now exists has been turned aside from his true vocation, exhibited in that Divine Law which he at once approves and fails to attain.

Christianity provides the only really complete answer to the problems of Ethics. It is not too much to say that the Naturalistic systems must be considered valid only in so far as they approximate to the presentation that is found in Holy Scripture.

Christianity as a Life-System

There is no one English word which expresses completely the place of Christianity in the realm of thought. The idea which is conveyed is one of entire completeness. Some of the later philosophers spoke of the world as a large sphere of service, and man as mirroring the world in miniature, a little but complete sphere of service. We must give to the Christian system something corresponding to that idea. The individual looks out upon the world, and if he were to attain completeness everything in the world upon which he looks out would not only minister to his needs, but would enter into his comprehension of reality. No two individuals would be in conflict. They would be essential features in the great whole of things, so that the world and the creation of rational beings would both be necessary for the fulness of reality. This is the ambition of all complete philosophical systems, and we dare to say that it is realised, or will be realised, in accordance with the lines of Revelation. Christianity is the fixed point of reference for all that occurs in nature and in man.

Archimedes said that if he were given a lever and a fulcrum he could move the world. What he meant was that, if only he could get to that point at which all things were in

balance, and operate the resources at his command, the world itself would be obedient to his will. But Christianity presents to us just that fixed position which Archimedes sought. It relates everything to the Sovereign God. He is the Maker of the world, and in Him we live and move and have our being. Nothing lies outside of Him, and therefore His purpose must be ultimately achieved. We have to consider later more closely the position of man as a fallen being. In one sense it is this fact which creates the ethical demand, because it shows us clearly man's failure to realise the perfect life. But the Christian system does not place the Fall outside of the will of God, it introduces it in proper relation to His sovereign demand. The tragedy of man's fallen condition is that he fails to realise that all things must be done to the glory of God. Because of his failure he stands in a different relation to God from that which is occupied by a perfect sinless being, but the relation is a true expression of that which God is, and leaves untouched the supreme presentation that everything in thought and action ultimately finds its realisation in the sovereign will of God. We are considering at present this aspect, not on its dark side, but on the side that reveals its glories. The humblest life becomes irradiated with the Divine purpose, the meanest effort rendered in loving obedience to the heavenly Father has its place in the eternal scheme of things. There is a dignity set upon labour that can be found nowhere else. This particular aspect is strongly emphasised in the Old Testament. A man declined to part with his inheritance because he recognised that here was the sphere of his opportunities, and here were the conditions under which he could glorify God. St. Paul in the New Testament shows how the sense of a Divine purpose, superior to the accidents of life, could ennoble what would otherwise be an almost intolerable condition. "Art thou called being bound? seek not to be free."

Christianity is not insensible to the duty of ameliorating material conditions. Its record shows that it has achieved more in this direction than any of the profound philosophies that have been developed in independence of it. Yet it never falls into the mistake of imagining that these conditions constitute the end of man's activities. However untoward they may be in their circumstances, they are still a means by which the soul may reach out after God,

and that very reaching out after God renders the individual superior to the sordidness and squalor of life. It would be well for us to return in fulness to the great idea that God is supreme. We can find our fulfilment in Him despite the deformities that still remain in the world through sin.

This doctrine of the Divine Sovereignty provides distinctive views concerning man's special relation to God. The Old and New Testament alike decline to regard man simply as the first among the primates. No doubt he is that in relation to the lower orders of being which also owe their origin to the will of the Eternal. But in man there has been created one who can apprehend God, and this lifts him out of the ruck of common existence. God holds counsel with Himself, and it is one of the glories of the doctrine of the Trinity that it provides for this feature of blessed intercourse between Persons. A solitary God would seem to make but little appeal to a human being constituted as a unit in a social organism. It is for this reason, possibly, that the revelation of the Old Testament, lofty as it is, continues to present law rather after an external manner. God tells us what we should do, and we should do it as God tells us. But even in the Old Testament there are already hints, perhaps we should say more than hints, that this external relation is transcended. God calls to man, God chooses man, God speaks to the righteous Abraham as His friend. There is here an intimacy of relation that does much to remove the superficial conception of an external potentate who lays down regulations. And in the exercise of prayer in the Old Testament men realised that there was an intimate communion between them and their Maker, so that the prophet Isaiah could say: " Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not." God in return can speak through the prophets, saying to His people: " You only have I known of all the nations that are upon the earth."

This sense of holy relation runs through the entire body of the Scriptures, and is supplemented by a unique provision for its continued enjoyment. Dimly in the Old Testament men recognised that the Spirit of God dwelt in them, and that their highest and holiest thoughts were not the product of an inner religious consciousness simply, but were directed through the gracious influence of Him Whom they sought.

In the New Testament this closer communion is fully revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ our Lord, and the living Spirit is given the character of a true Person, Who is ready to help our infirmities, Who dwells in us and makes us partakers of the Divine nature.

Not only does the Christian system, in its ultimate dependence on the Sovereignty of God, illustrate and define this special relation of God to men, but it equally indicates a special relation between man and his fellows. Early in the Hebrew code the message was given: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." And the reason supplied for this command is given in the words: "God created man in His own image." It has taken the world many weary centuries to grasp the significance of this great conception. It may be contended with a measure of truth that its full significance has not yet been grasped. Alone in the Christian system is each man viewed as an image of ultimate reality. Where this conviction dominates the mind, we are in a fair way to realising Kant's famous dictum, "Act so as to treat humanity in thyself or in another as an end only, never as a means." It is true, as the poet Burns remarks, that "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." But it is impossible for the individual who realises that in his fellow there is an image of the Sovereign Lord, Who commands his unquestioning allegiance, ever to be happy while treating that image with disrespect and contumely. The Christian system did not openly attack current social customs which were derogatory to this ideal, but it enforced the ideal, and as it took possession of the minds of men the derogatory customs disappeared.

This conception of man being made in the image of God operates in two ways. First, it teaches me that my fellow-creature is also an expression of that Divine nature which I reflect. It tells me that he is possessed of the same rational character, and has the same infinite capacity for holiness. It is no wonder, then, that the missionary enterprise animated the breasts of those who lived close to God. Even the savage was to them the image of God, and they had the consciousness that the blessed Spirit, Who restored the lineaments of the Eternal in their own soul, was able to do so for the savage, and, because He was the universal Spirit, they could not limit His operations or restrict His grace. It

was sufficient for them that the call was given, "Go ye into all the world." They realised that as God had constituted mankind in a social organism, so it was His gracious purpose to unite them in spiritual bonds, through the labours of those who had been touched by His grace. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" finds its counterpart in the truth, "Thy neighbour is as thyself an image of God." Not only so, but this very truth leads on to a distinctive view of man's position in the world as a whole. It is not mere rhetoric when the opening chapters of Genesis give man a measure of domination. It may be said that the impulse to all scientific research lies behind that particular determination of man's position. Man stands, as it were, between two worlds. On his material side he is linked with nature, a nature which, but for the defilement of sin, would aid him in realising his spiritual destiny. On his spiritual side he stands in close union with the God Who made him.

But this dual position carries with it certain peculiar features of its own. We have referred more than once to the supernatural character that inevitably attaches to the investigator. The Christian system supplies the true reason for this. Man is at once in the world, and not of it. He has been framed for communion with its Author, and he is destined to share with God a place of dignity and control. We have only to contrast this with the old view which found expression in Aristotle, who tells us that the sun and stars are "far more divine" than man. As Sir Alexander Grant puts it: "Aristotle never would have accepted the saying, 'In the world there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind,' and, as we may surely go on to add, in mind there is nothing great but what is moral." The Christian system, so far from regarding the actions of man as "slight and insignificant," teaches us that in the idea of an end which determines action we have the truest representation of the nature of God Himself. Modern non-Christian exponents of Science are hardly aware of the extent to which they have taken over the Christian ideal as the foundation of their philosophy.

To sum up our conclusion under this head, the real unity which we seek is best found in a consistent and wholehearted Christianity based upon the Sovereignty of God.

It finds satisfaction in the realisation that He is the Alpha and the Omega. That which emerges in experience is a development of one single purpose, and finds its explanation in the unity of a will which is a true expression of infinite reality. It needs to be borne in mind that the pioneers of modern scientific research argued that, as one God created the world, the world so created must be a harmony, reflecting this Divine purpose. It is open to us to work backwards, taking the varied strands in our complex life and in its relation to the external universe, and weaving them into a whole under the conception that our chief end is "to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever." The purpose of the world, viewed from this aspect, is not to produce isolated entities, but on the contrary to move towards the high ideal of a unity of intelligent beings, who rejoice in God, and in whom He rejoices. There is a profound truth underlying the conception of Green that the Eternal Consciousness finds realisation in the finite wills of men. But there is a deeper truth in the complementary Christian conception that this Eternal Consciousness is no mere aggregate of finite intelligences, nor even the highest that the intellectuality of man can produce, but a spiritual Being, Who within the ambit of the Divine nature knows and loves, and has called into existence creatures who exhibit the same characteristics, and to whom, therefore, He can make His will known.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

WHEN MEN SPEAK OF the Divine Sovereignty, there is most frequently conjured up in their minds the notion of a great eternal Force, Whose power no man can withstand, and Whose will must be obeyed. As a consequence of this conception, the relation between the sovereign will of God and Ethics assumes that character of externality to which we frequently have had to direct attention. But this is to mistake the magnitude of the conception, and reduces it to a human analogy which is a very imperfect representation of it. The Divine Sovereignty is all-inclusive. God is the source of all creaturehood. As St. Paul expresses it, " In Whom we live and move and have our being." It is necessary to repeat this conception at every stage of our inquiry. If this be true, the relation between man and God is something different from the relation between a sovereign and a subject in the finite sphere. God, indeed, declares His will, but, inasmuch as He has created us after His image, His will, in a very real sense, is our will. The dislocation occasioned by sin alone obscures that fact. Man, as originally formed, would naturally follow the will of God, and recognise that in doing so he was giving the fullest completion to his own nature. Morality would be realised without constraint, our impulses and desires would work in perfect harmony with our reason, and our reason would delight itself in God. It is a mistake, therefore, to abide by that form of ethical theory which puts man on the one side and God on the other, and makes the link that binds them a mere fiat, which on the hypothesis need have no corroboration either in the reason or nature of man. Man's highest end is the good, and this fact has been realised even by those who have not invoked any doctrine of creation or any idea of relation to a personal God.

But what is the good? It seems mere tautology to assert that it is what man seeks after. That is only to

say that purpose is an end which presents itself as desirable. The moment we seek to give content to the good, and place it in contrast with that which is conceived as being lower or baser, we endow it with a kind of quasi-personality. Mill's sense of dignity, Sidgwick's philosophic intuitionism, really resolve themselves into an assumption that there is a better way which man ought to follow, but which is sometimes lost. Perhaps the clearest illustration of the two is found in Sidgwick, who places at the base of action a number of axioms, which he regards as self-evident: the axiom of rational benevolence, the axiom of rational self-love, and the axiom of justice. He combines these, indeed, with an unproved, but commonsense, dictum, that good is the pleasure of some sentient being. It is desirable on account of the conscious life in which it will be realised. It is obvious that if our life stands in a harmony of the whole, there is a full realisation of this desirability. If God made us for Himself, it follows, as Augustine expresses it, that our hearts cannot be at rest until they find rest in Him. This reluctance to press back innate principles to a position in which they are completely unified constitutes one of the principal weaknesses of Rational Ethics.

But it is necessary to go further than merely stating that Divine Sovereignty, thus conceived, is not external to the individual. There is a natural demand that Ethics should receive a true content. We have already indicated that the ordinary criticism of Kant, that he did not give a filling to his maxims, is based on a misconception of his purpose. But this is not to say that such filling is undesirable or unnecessary. Given the moral principles which ought to govern our actions, we at once seek to apply them to the ordinary circumstances of everyday life, to give practical force to this high theory. It is not otherwise with the relation between God and man, and it is the glory of the Christian system that it declares that God has spoken in human speech and has concerned Himself with human conditions. He has shown to us the good and the true way. To a believer in God, once the conviction takes possession of the soul that the message is Divine, controversy ends. The individual has to say with Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" and if the Judge of all the earth does right, there is but one attitude to be adopted, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." So in our effort to reach

after the full realisation of our being, the will of God must be a final consideration. It belongs to the very conception of infinitude that there can be no external standard by which that will may be estimated. In our creaturehood we have limitations. Our vision is not perfect, and consequently our ends may not be in themselves ultimate. This difficulty does not confront us in relation to the will of God. What He requires man to do must be the best for man, and must be the best in the final purpose of the world which He created, otherwise there would be an element of disharmony in the Divine. The result of this conclusion is that there is presented to us a standard of goodness which is absolute and eternal, and is not conditioned solely by the will of man. The greatest happiness of the greatest number may in this aspect gain a higher moral significance than the Utilitarian system has given to it. If happiness means the full realisation of personality, then by approximation to the eternal standard the aim that was the moral driving force of Utilitarianism is capable of realisation. In addition, in the Christian presentation there is strongly developed a sense of union. The dictum that morality is only possible in society finds a new significance in the calling into being of the Church. We are one body in Christ, members one of another, and each part, like an eye or hand or foot, functions in the interests of the whole. And not only so, but there is a call for a deeper union still. Not only does man join in happy amity with man for the fulfilment of a great ideal, but each man is joined indissolubly to the Head, which is Jesus Christ. Also, room is found in the system for the call of God and the human response which finds true spiritual delight in worship and service.

Large numbers of the mediæval scholastics failed to see the full implication of this theory of perfect harmony. Gerson, for example, was able to say, " God does not require actions because they are good, but they are good because He requires them, just as others are evil because He forbids them." Along this line of thought it is impossible to free the commands of God from a certain aspect of arbitrariness. The idea is implied that for the satisfaction of His mere will He outlines a course of conduct which would otherwise have no moral content. To put the matter rather harshly, it would be competent to God to remove all the " nots " from the commandments. An unfortunate English printer

removed one "not" inadvertently, and gave the world the curiosity of the "Ungodly Bible." He was fined heavily.

We need continually to remember that the commandments of God find a response in our human reason. A perfect man would regard them as holy and wise and good. Our consciousness is repelled by the idea that true goodness, the final pursuit of man's highest end, depends upon caprice, even if it be the caprice of an infinite Being. Indeed, when we pen the words "the caprice of an infinite Being," we find ourselves wondering whether we have not stated a contradiction in terms. There is a wide gap between caprice and infinite reason, and a being who had not reason in its fullest expression would not be regarded by us as infinite. The Divine Sovereignty must not be conceived, therefore, as something which has been imposed upon us against our judgment and reason, but, on the contrary, something which, conceived truly, interprets that which we are seeking after in our finite and creaturely state. It was John Calvin who said: "Yet we espouse not the notion of the Romish theologians concerning the absolute and arbitrary power of God, which, on account of its profaneness, deserves our detestation. We represent not God as lawless, Who is a law to Himself; because, as Plato says, laws are necessary to men who are the subjects of evil desires; but the will of God is not only pure from every fault, but the highest standard of perfection, even the law of all laws. But we deny that He is liable to be called to any account; we deny also that we are proper judges, deciding on this cause according to our own apprehension. . . . For what stronger reason can be alleged than when we are directed to consider who God is? How could any injustice be committed by Him who is the Judge of the world? If it is the peculiar property of the nature of God to do justice, then He naturally loves righteousness and hates iniquity" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book III, chapter xxiii, sections 2 and 4). It was a wise Scotsman who said: "To fear God and to fear nothing else is the first principle even of worldly success."

This conception clears many obscurities. Just as we guide ourselves by the judgment of those whom we recognise as wiser and more experienced than ourselves, seeing part of their proposals clearly, and following that which is less clear in the light of our knowledge of their superior wisdom,

so when we relate our lives to the light of God, and yield ourselves to His command, we are assured that if we know not what He does now, we shall know hereafter. We submit to His will as a truer and holier will than that which we possess. Many " conflicts of loyalties " are thus resolved. Even where there is temporary dislocation of happy relations because of fidelity to that which He commanded; even when we have to love Him more than father or mother or earthly friends, we realise that the greater includes the less. If God is at once the End and the Beginning, then by placing His service first, ultimately we are exhibiting the truest and best love for closest friends or country, because if He is Himself Love, and purposes in His infinite grace to save the world, these lesser loyalties can only coincide with that purpose where they are included in His will. No doubt many a simple Christian has followed the will of God without formulating any such elaborate theory of the reason impelling him. He has loved God, and subordinated his own interests to the overmastering conviction that " He doth all things well." But such a simple confiding attitude is resolvable into this philosophy of life. Because it is so resolvable, it becomes our supreme duty, as well as our highest interest, to put God first.

CHAPTER XV

MAN A FALLEN SPIRITUAL BEING

IN MANY PLACES IN our previous discussion we have been compelled to indicate that one of the great problems which confront the student of Ethics is the problem of the Fall. No system of Ethics can be wholly true to fact which ignores this supreme tragedy. At present many so-called Christian systems of Ethics find no place for this particular doctrine, and err in consequence. It must further be borne in mind that all Naturalistic systems are affected by the consideration that they are dealing with man in his present condition, and sometimes unconsciously assume that his present condition reveals him not only as he is, but as he ought to be.

The evolutionary hypothesis in some of its forms has given considerable emphasis to the idea that there is no room for the Fall in human experience. Some have even described this tragedy in human experience as "a fall up." The conception underlying this quaint phraseology is that, at a certain stage of his being, the dawning consciousness of man felt the urge of a great dissatisfaction. As a consequence of this, he condemned his former condition, not recognising that it was inevitable, and the ground of his present aspiration after that which is better. We have already drawn attention to the fact that the acute mind of Huxley was unable to acquiesce entirely in this portrayal of man's nature. Whether he recognised the fact fully or not, his assertion that all moral progresss consisted in combating the relentless law of nature embodied in the evolutionary slogan, "The better adapted survive," was a confession of the fact that a new element, hostile to the general principle of nature, is discoverable in man's being. No doubt this conception of Huxley must be modified by those who are not prepared to assert that a simple process of elimination is a sufficient explanation of the varieties in nature. Few who adopt the evolutionary hypothesis with which we are concerned would now be prepared to assert that natural selection solves all difficulties. But although

Huxley's position needs to be modified in the light of this reflection, it stands as a witness to the fact that the moral element in our nature has something in it which is unique, something which distinguishes it from physical development. We do not assist reflection by contrasting things that differ, and there is a great difference between moral and physical reaction. It is only in the former that the element of blameworthiness or praiseworthiness has a proper place.

Dr. Orr, in his book *The Progress of Dogma*, has some important reflections on this theory. He writes as follows: "Man, on the new reading, is not a fallen being, but is in process of ascent; he deserves, not blame, but, on the whole, praise, that he has done so marvellously well, considering the disadvantageous circumstances in which he started; the doctrines of redemption associated with the older view —atonement, regeneration, justification, sanctification, resurrection—have no longer any place, or change their meaning. There are those who, under the influence of the modern spirit, cheerfully face these consequences, and even think them a gain. Unfortunately, the elements it is proposed to dispense with—the sense of sin and guilt, the pain of spiritual bondage, the war between flesh and spirit, recognised as *evil* in the self-condemnation and shame that attend it, the craving for atonement, the felt need of regeneration, the consciousness of forgiveness and renewal—are not simply so interwoven with the texture of Scripture that to part with them is virtually to give up *Christian* theology altogether, but are parts of an actual human *experience* that cannot be blotted out of existence, or dismissed from consideration, even to suit the requirements of a modern scientific hypothesis. . . . Evolution is a theory which, within certain limits, is supported by an accumulation of evidences that, to the modern scientific mind, makes its acceptance inevitable. But evolution has its limits; it does not explain everything. Above all, it does not explain *origins*. It has not yet even mastered the factors which explain change. I believe I am warranted in saying that, up to the present moment, within the limits in which it has been scientifically justified, the doctrine of evolution imposes on us no obligation to think of man otherwise than as a special product of divine wisdom and power; not that natural factors did not co-operate in his origination, or

that he does not stand in genetic connection with the organic past—everything supports that view—but that with his advent there was a new appearance on the earth, the entrance of a rational and moral agent, who bore on his soul the print of the divine image, and who, for aught that science can adduce to the contrary, may have been as pure in nature, and have stood in as close and conscious relations with his Maker, as the most orthodox theory can require. With man's appearance at the head of the organic world, a new moral and spiritual kingdom was founded."

It is rather remarkable in connection with these remarks of Dr. Orr to note that Haeckel declared that: " Spontaneous generation, a theory which has never been proved, is indispensable for the consistent non-miraculous history of creation " (*History of Creation*, p. 348). And Professor William Bateson as late as 1922 declared that: " The essential bit of the theory of evolution which is concerned with the origin of species remains utterly mysterious . . . we cannot here and now explain how species arose " (*Science*, January, 1922).

It has become almost customary to demand, even of students in the realm of Ethics, that they should direct attention to the great changes that have been introduced in moral conceptions by the evolutionary theory. This is largely due to an imperfect apprehension of the difficulties and problems connected with modern scientific development along these lines. Popular science makes claims that the more cautious investigators decline to endorse. An interesting illustration of this is the readiness with which the recapitulation theory, as originally formulated by Haeckel, is appealed to in popular writings. There is manifested no sense of the difficulties with which further investigation has surrounded the whole problem of embryological development. It is very necessary to be on our guard against accepting too readily the latest theory which is expounded in a popular text-book. The complications in the cosmic processes become more evident the further we advance, and nowhere is this more true than in the moral sphere.

The Christian system has nothing to fear from comparison with other outlines of the progress of moral order. Whatever is true in nature will be found to fit admirably into the Divine revelation. The evil of hasty generalisation is

the evil which we should be careful to avoid in the ethical sphere. This tendency has frequently been marked. Resemblances have been taken for identities, and the peculiar character of self-consciousness has been frequently ignored.

It will carry the investigation too far afield to pursue this subject to its final issue, but the cardinal error in so-called evolutionary Ethics can be seen to be the confusion which identifies a succession of states or feelings with the consciousness of them. Dr. Iverach has given clear expression to this aspect of the matter: " The one thing which English psychologists have ever sought to avoid is just this unity of self-consciousness. We get from them quite a number of useful observations. We get endless disquisitions on mind and body, on the nervous system and its psychological accompaniments, on the laws of association, on mental faculties, on the emotions and the will, and on a thousand other topics; but they have so dealt with all of them as to make us forget that the feelings, emotions, volitions, associations, belong to a self, are those of a self-conscious rational being. The self is lost amid the feelings, cognitions, and volitions; and psychology proceeds as if these feelings, cognitions, and volitions were separate and independent realities. One might suppose that Professor Green, in his drastic and dramatic *Introduction to Hume*, had made an end of that kind of thing. But no: English psychology seems, like the Bourbons, to have learnt nothing and to have forgotten nothing. It is still alive, and has been recently reinforced from abroad, both from France and from Germany; and those who have recently dealt with the matter, Ribot and Münsterberg, have reduced consciousness to a mere accompaniment of physiological changes.

" Notwithstanding this persistent view of psychology, and the reinforcement brought to it from beyond the sea, there is this to be said, that the presupposition of all possible psychology is the possibility of self-consciousness, to which all feelings, cognitions, volitions, are to be referred. You may make of it what you please, but this much will remain, that it is the central unity to which all possible experience is to be referred. The self-conscious being stands over against all possible objects of experience, and refuses to be included among them. It is the self to which they are related, and in which the experience finds its unity " (*Evolution and Christianity*, pp. 165, 166).

No system of Ethics is possible without this presupposition. Hence it is necessary to have regard to man's essential constitution. As an individual he is a centre of reference to which all things are related in the fulness of knowledge. He binds together the various items of his consciousness into the whole of a united experience. He persists throughout all the changes of things round him, and throughout the changes that manifest themselves in his conscious experience—and the changes of things, so far as his knowledge goes, are just those affections of his inner nature which constitute the elements of consciousness. The permanent for him is the fact that he knows, and permanence in the objects of perception is the fact that they are continually known. Certain recurring sensations are grouped together and formed into an "object," which has no existence for the individual apart from the consciousness. This inner reference by which unity is achieved lies always at the core of experience, man relates the world to himself. But man also relates other self-conscious beings to himself. He does not realise his full capabilities in the isolation of his individual life. He is a social being, and therefore fellowship with his fellows develops his character, and attends the feelings of moral being. Individuality, as it were, craves for a foil, and cannot find an adequate foil except in the existence of interrelations of beings like himself. And so we discover that personality has in it a feature that transcends individuality.

Personality is only properly completed in the relation of individuals one to the other. This is one of the most difficult conceptions, and yet it is essential to a true view of man and of God. The individual finds his life enriched and developed by happy relations with those who, like himself, are centres of consciousness. Reason refuses, at it were, to trammel itself in one single soul. It reaches out after a unity in which it may have fuller expression without destroying that self-determination which is the essence of moral responsibility. "No man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself." Things form, as it were, the inert content of the mind, but the reaction of individuals one upon another, each with an inner core of reference, quickens men into full activity, so that they find their full life in an ordered unity. This leads inevitably to the conception that the final reality is such a unity of persons in

a being who can reflect this particular feature, and yet is free from the limitations and restrictions that hedge round finite existence. Professor Flewelling writes: " If, then, the human personality is to locate itself in the universe, or to imagine that which survives the passing world of events, it is driven to affirm a supreme enduring personality in which the world and all lesser personalities find a common unity " (*E.R.E.*, vol. ix, p. 773). But this characteristic of inner reference is from the moral aspect the spiritual element in man. By its very character it compels us to declare that man is essentially a unity, in which body and spirit are true counterparts of each other, and are united in the realm of consciousness. The old Greek conception that the body was an encumbrance is more difficult of acceptance in the light of modern psychological development. It may be perfectly true that the neurosis is entirely different in character from the act of conscious will, but the union between the two is one of the greatest intimacies with which we are presented in nature.

The Christian system does full justice to this aspect, and regards man as perfect when in body and soul he fulfils his destiny. Death and the disembodied condition is a stage which must be transcended. The resurrection is the final hope. It may be said here that the Scriptures did not seek to offer explanations of this fact, they dealt with it so far as it is a condition of our moral progress and an evidence of our creaturehood. One of the most remarkable features, particularly in the Old Testament presentation, is the freedom from current theories that characterises the sober narrative. They are related, indeed, to the particular environment in which they first found expression, but the relation is such as to separate them from those accidental circumstances that have bound the human race for centuries to entirely misleading conceptions of man's nature and of God's Sovereignty.

But we have not yet reached the ethical content of the Christian message. That which we have outlined is a preparation for it, but the full value of the Bible idea is only apprehended when we remember that it presents man as a being capable of holding converse with God, possessed of a nature which can be the home of the Eternal Spirit, and capable of response to the direct leadership revealed in His messages to the sons of men. This sublime con-

ception of blessed, intimate fellowship has been groped after in the ancient world, but has come to completion only in that message of truth to which we refer our highest ambitions, and in which we find satisfaction for our deepest longings.

It might appear as if the progress of humanity would be one uninterrupted triumphal march to that peak of attainment in which all his potentialities would find actual experience. But we here meet with that dark shadow which has obtruded itself again and again in our inquiry. Man has great potentialities. Man has failed to realise them. For the human race alone such words as "iniquity," "transgression" and "sin" have a deep and painful meaning. The lower creatures in the scale of being may be cramped by circumstances, and have their natural powers restricted, but they do not exhibit the peculiar feature which belongs to humanity of deliberately thwarting their own deeper instincts and falsifying their own true character. Evolution, as we have seen, in certain of its forms denies the Fall. But it leaves us with the phenomena of remorse, blame, moral ambition and repentance altogether unsolved. To exclude these from the consideration of a moral system is to leave it not only incomplete, but wholly ineffective. Hence we witness the effort to offer substitutes which preserve the name and explain the experience, while denying the essential moral significance of some of these characteristics of human activity. The Bible meets the problem squarely. Man acts contrary to his own deeper inclinations because he has permitted an alien principle to take possession of his soul. In the language of Kant, he has "taken bad maxims into the will." We may say that this is the fact, and we may recognise the high moral endeavour of the philosopher to correct the tendency, but the explanation of the fact has still to be sought.

It would be too much to say that the Scriptures offer a rational account of man's Fall. They deal with it only in so far as it is necessary for a practical realisation of his position and for the basal hope of recovery. There is much to be said for Augustine's position that evil is itself an irrational thing, and it is its very irrationality which makes it so difficult of explanation. It has become the fashion to regard the early chapters of Genesis as very primitive pieces of folklore. Like a good many other

nineteenth-century conjectures, the problem here is beset with unforeseen difficulties. The story as we have it emerges at a fairly advanced stage of human experience. Not only was writing known, a fact which is now generally conceded, but the early traditions of the Israelitish people came to them from an advanced civilisation in Babylon. The age of Abraham, not to speak of the age of Moses, was an age of advanced literary activity. Merchants conducted correspondence with their customers in distant parts of an extended empire, and there was an established system of posts throughout the Babylonian dominions. Folklore, in such circumstances, tends to reflect the more advanced judgment and beliefs that are common property. Even if the primitive form is retained—and this is not always the case—the meaning behind the language itself undergoes a certain transformation. It has no longer its early naïve significance, it attaches to itself something of the sophistication which accompanies developing culture. This is a fact which seems to have escaped notice in many quarters, yet it could be abundantly illustrated even in our modern life. When we look at the pageant of the past, we see it very largely through the eyes of the present, and interpret the messages that come to us from a distant time in analogy with our present experience, relating them almost unconsciously to the developed knowledge of our day.

When we examine these early stories, it is possible in the light of this reflection to assign reasons for their persistence. They embody some of the most profound truths of all human experience. They represent man as seeking communion, not only with his fellow, but with the Eternal Spirit, and they portray for us a blessed time when this communion was an actual reality. It is surely a matter of significance that the cultured Greek and the cultured Babylonian looked back to a golden age, and carefully preserved those early intimations of it which were found in their literature. Instead of dismissing these ancient stories as kindergarten messages, we would do better to inquire closely into the reason which impelled men of advanced thought to lay them at the foundation of their religious experience. It is very easy to be flippant, but flippancy has never produced great results in human experience. For our present purpose it is not necessary to consider further the origin of the Genesis stories.

A more immediate problem presents itself. If a personal reference may be pardoned, the writer's book, *In Understanding be Men*, has been subject in a particular quarter to severe criticism. Some of this criticism no doubt is well directed, but the particular feature to which attention is now called in this adverse judgment reflects exactly that weakness of Humanism to which reference has been made more than once in the present work. The critic asserted that in the presentation of the Fall a cardinal defect could be noted. It was suggested that the language almost implied belief in the literal story of the Fall. To bring the matter to an issue, the question of paramount importance is not, Is the story of the Fall literal? There are many problems which stand out clearly in the structure of the story itself which render an answer to this question in the affirmative one of extreme difficulty—*e.g.*, Are we to understand that the seed of the serpent are literal serpents? Are we to understand that the sentence on the tempter robbed him of a literal power of locomotion? It may be assumed that the early writers were as well aware of these problems as we are, and the Fathers of the Church had no difficulty whatever in attaching a true, though non-literal, sense to these elements in the story.

But the real question, which it seems to the writer the critic overlooked, is a much deeper one, Have we here in the record a story of a literal Fall? Two views that are now claiming attention are: First, that the Fall story is simply a rationalisation of man's inner sense of failure; and secondly, that the Fall story is a simple explanation of the first downward step in the course of human history, and explaining, so far as it can be explained, how this step took place.

If we are to accept the view that the story of the Fall is simply a delineation of the bad conscience, then we are left with no guidance as to how the bad conscience came into existence. If we are to hold, on the other hand, that in simple language, suited to a primitive people, a great fact of an initial revolt of the human race in the person of their head is here given to us, then we have a starting-point which explains man's failure and contains in it also the hope of his recovery. If these two explanations are kept clearly distinct, as they ought to be, the superiority of that position which regards the early record as setting forth an actual tragedy will become more apparent, and we shall

find it possible to accept, not only the Genesis account, but all the consequences that flow from it in the later history of the Old and New Testaments.

It is sometimes said that the Genesis story finds no recognition until a later date in Israelitish history, but this statement ignores certain facts. The name "Adam" is the name of the race as well as the individual. At an early period the name "Enosh," signifying weakness and inability, gathers to itself the same generic character. Furthermore, the record which follows, with its division between the righteous and the wicked, and its assumption of a redemptive process, becomes only intelligible after the Fall story is accepted as a postulate. It is also admitted that the story of the Fall belongs to the earliest stratum of Hebrew writing. Whether we accept the documentary hypothesis or not, the Israelites were in possession of this story from the dawn of their literary history.

It is true that the precise identification with Satan comes late in expression, but it seems scarcely possible that the conception of a force hostile to God should not have obtained a full-orbed character much earlier in Israelitish history, and that no such identification of the serpent and the Evil One would ever have occurred to Hebrew writers. The truth seems rather to be that the element in the Fall story which gripped the imagination, and determined later literary reference, is its depiction of the sinful heart of man. Dr. Driver refers for the late origin of the identification to a comment of Dr. A. B. Davidson in his *Commentary on Job*. It may be well, therefore, to cite another passage from the same writer, which presents the view that we have advocated above: "There is nothing against the idea that the temptation in the form of a serpent recorded in Genesis iii. proceeded from *the Satan*. It is true, Old Testament Scripture does not say directly anywhere that the Satan and the serpent were identical, or that the one used the other. The first direct statement that Satan was the tempter in the garden occurs in an Apocryphal book; in the Wisdom of Solomon ii. 23 it is said: 'For God created man to be immortal; . . . nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world.' There are, however, passages in the Old Testament which form a transition to this, where the serpent is spoken of as the foe of God and of His people and the like" (*Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 304).

The Lutheran writer Martensen, whose work was published as early as 1888 in the English edition, has some interesting comments which deserve attention. He says: "In the Mosaic account of the fall of man (Gen. iii.), we meet with a combination of history and sacred symbolism, a figurative representation of an actual event. The fact of the fall is there represented by a consciousness to which both paradise and the fall are transcendental and *prehistoric*; for which reason there can be no immediate knowledge of it, but only a mediate and an allegorical one, 'as in a glass darkly.' . . . Although the fall of man is a true history, which having happened once has become universal history, it is nevertheless not eternal history; this would involve as its necessary consequence that sin is inseparable from the conception of man, and that sin was absolutely indispensable if the created spirit were to attain its destination. . . . In an arbitrary act the Ego places itself in contradiction to its own conception, to the universal liberty necessary for reason. It has become evil, because it has opened up within itself the contradiction between its individuality and its *universal* essence, between its subjective arbitrariness and the *necessity* of reason. This experience of its double essence, of the contradiction in its own innermost nature, is the bitter fruit which man has plucked from the tree of knowledge."

So much needs to be said to show that there is a wide range of conception within the limits of the conservative position, which regards the story of the Fall not as a representation of the experience of unworthiness, imperfectly transferred in thought to an original first transgression, but, on the contrary, an historic record of a deliberate departure from the purpose and will of God. It has become too much the fashion in modern times to regard such a presentation with flippancy, and to take refuge in vague terms, such as "myth" or "allegory," that relieve the student from any serious attempt to grapple with the existing problem of man's sinfulness as it displays itself in human experience. But for the purpose of ethical study the theory of the Fall is of tremendous importance. It alone accounts for the fact that man persistently lives below the level even of his own enlightened demands, not to speak of the purer revelation which comes to him from God.

If the Fall be admitted as a fact, it demands that we

should receive with great caution the findings of Natural Ethics. This is not to say that reason does not utter its voice, and call men back again to higher conceptions. The essential distinction between right and wrong remains as an inalienable possession of a moral being. We are not at liberty, therefore, to reject incontinently any demand of reason. That would be to destroy man's nature and wreck even the hope of restoration. But we have to temper our acceptance of these monitions of the natural man with the remembrance that reason itself has not been exempt from the obscuration which has fallen upon his spirit. Total depravity is an expression that is used loosely and foolishly. In its proper theological significance it means that there is no part of man free from the taint of the Fall. His powers remain and function in their natural order, but they function under a disability that is total. Reason, no less than the emotions, shares in this disability, so that it is no longer possible for a man by searching to find out the Almighty to perfection. And yet this disability is conceived as a weight upon the human spirit, a hindrance to its true activity. A testimony to righteousness remains, although the power to attain it has been lost, and the goal of righteousness itself is no longer clearly observed.

The effects of the Fall, in so far as it affects ethical theory, would thus be twofold. (i) In the first place it would negative any notion which might otherwise be entertained that, by a simple process of development, the end of human perfection would be attained. If the reason of man is impure, so that while he can still conceive right he is unable to conceive it perfectly, then the highest dictates of his unaided morality will still fall below the full purpose of his creation. It may be said, without fear of contradiction, that this fact has been exemplified in all Naturalistic systems. Sir Alexander Grant, *e.g.*, tells us that Aristotle, when seeking to develop the idea of the good, drops for the moment into a form of nominalism. He writes: " Aristotle is by no means consistently a nominalist, though here he avows a sort of nominalism for the time. That he was not prepared with an answer to this question as to the nature of good, that he did not lay it down as the basis of his Ethics, is one indication amongst many of the tentative and uncertain method with which he approached the science." The same writer tells us: " In Plato there seems often, if not always, present a

sense of the weakness of the individual as contrasted with the eternal and the divine . . . the philosopher, in his pictures, does not triumph over the world, but rather is glad to seize on 'some tradition' 'like a stray plank,' to prevent his being lost; he feels that his Philosophy on earth is but 'knowing in part.' Aristotle, on the contrary, rather represents the strength than the weakness of human nature. And in his picture of the happiness of Philosophy we cannot but feel that there is overmuch elation, and something that requires toning down" (*Aristotle's Ethics*, 161-165).

Criticisms and comparisons, such as these made by a careful student, indicate the fact that reason itself is possessed of some consciousness of its own weakness. When investigation is pursued far enough with an earnest spirit a barrier is reached, over which man wistfully gazes, but which he cannot overpass.

(ii) The second consequence of the theory of the Fall is that it exhibits and explains man's inability. Not only does a haze hang over the final end so that it is imperfectly comprehended, but ends which are clearly within reach theoretically, and absolutely defined, are yet unattained in actual experience. The plaint of man from the beginning has been: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" His sense of responsibility is greater at every stage than his sense of achievement.

The story which is presented in the early chapters of Genesis, that a high ideal stretched before him and he voluntarily surrendered to a baser conception, adequately explains this sad contradiction. Outside of this theory, as has been frequently indicated, there is no adequate explanation of man's sinful inability.

In considering the relation of the Fall to ethical theory, we need to bear in mind that character is not ready-made. We are forming it as we go. But the materials which go to form character, through the continued exercise of choice, are those which are resident in our inner nature and in its reactions upon a given environment. There are elements in our nature that reveal that we are not simply units, but are found in organic relation to the race. What has been called "the solidarity of the race" is a fact of experience. The whole system of education assumes this as a self-evident truth. If character were formed by a series of wholly capricious acts it would be idle to pursue a system

which brings to bear an ordered influence on the whole life. Strange as it may appear at first sight, it is in this definite determination of our acts in reference to our previously formed character that the essence of freedom lies. A series of unrelated actions, for which no reason could be supplied except that " they happen," would not be the expression of a true self. Freedom implies the relating of events to our needs and desires. Hence the capacity to trace our volitions to a settled base in nature is the ground of responsibility, because responsibility depends on the concept of freedom. The message of the Scriptures is that, at the very foundation of our being, there is a warping tendency which must display itself in our activities. There is need of a new birth, a re-creation of God, if the effects of this warp are to be counteracted. " Old things " must become " new " through the omnipotent power of God Himself. Yet, we venture to repeat, inasmuch as this inherent warp is ours, a constituent of " the self," we are responsible for its display in conscious choice. We have taken up this spirit of alienation and revolt, and determined our will in opposition to the demands of God and to the dictates of our own reason. In doing so, we have not passed beyond the limits of our nature.

The truth is somewhat clumsily expressed by stating that man is metaphysically free because his determinations are his own, based on his judgment, reason and impulses, while he is morally bound because his determinations are those of a perverted self, so that the ultimate reaction is contrary to the will of God, and must remain so until man's nature is changed. The Fall brings us forcibly to the consideration of the history that lies behind our determinations, and witnesses to the cramping influence of our sinful state. The admission of the evil principle into the soul unfits it for a higher flight of moral endeavour. But we cannot cut short our history at the moment when evil entered. It arose as a circumstance connected with the free choice of " the self," and behind it lies the condition of man in innocency, which might have been maintained but for his act of rebellion.

The origin of the first act must always present peculiar difficulties, and yet there must be a first act, a true reaction on presented material. If we can conceive, as it seems possible to do, man in an indeterminate state, capable of

weighing the scales in favour of good or evil, and under the influence of the seducer choosing the latter alternative, then the very failure implies a standard to which he refused to conform. The standard remains unaltered, though man by his wilful transgression is sadly changed. To say otherwise would be to destroy all moral order at its source. Lord Acton was once asked how he could remain a Roman Catholic and deny the dogma of Infallibility formulated in 1870. He is reported to have said: "If the Pope has changed his religion, that is no reason why I should." Might it not be said: "If man has changed his attitude towards God, that is no reason why the moral law should be altered to suit his convenience"? In fact, if the moral law were altered, not only would man cease to be blameworthy as the argument in view suggests, but the distinction between right and wrong, of which man is still conscious, would cease to operate—there could be no praise or blame where we have a changing standard.

It is still less reasonable to assert that psychology, particularly in its physical, experimental aspect, has dispelled the idea of responsibility.

The fact of consciousness is an immediate experience, and it seems impossible to refer such an experience to sensory activities. We seem to be arguing in a circle. The sensory facts are interpreted by consciousness, and only through that medium can we explain them, and yet we seek to derive the explanatory element from those conditions which it explains. Dr. William McDougall, in his interesting volume *Body and Mind*, indicates the prejudice against the theory of the soul which operates to a large extent in scientific circles. He writes: "I am aware that to many minds it must appear nothing short of a scandal that anyone occupying a position in an academy of learning, other than a Roman Catholic seminary, should in this twentieth century defend the old-world notion of the soul of man. . . . In short, it cannot be denied that, as William James told us at Oxford three years ago, 'souls are out of fashion.'

"But I am aware also that not one in a hundred of those scientists and philosophers who confidently and even scornfully reject the notion has made any impartial and thorough attempt to think out the psychophysical problem in the light of all the relevant data now available and of the history of previous thought on the question" (pp. xi, xii).

One of the strongest arguments that he uses is associated with his idea of meaning. By meaning he refers to the consciousness of meaning, and he draws attention to the fact that it is absurd to suggest that the meaning of a sentence is merely the sum or aggregate of the psychic fringes of the words, each fringe being in turn a complex of obscure sensations or images. The meaning of the sentence is present to the consciousness as a unitary whole, yet it has no physical correlate in the brain of a corresponding unitary whole. The sensory content of consciousness remains unchanged, or but little changed, when we are conscious of an object, and when we reflect or are conscious of the idea of the object. He also points out that very diverse conjunctions of sense stimuli evoke the same reaction, and on the other hand conjunctions of sense stimuli differing only in respect of some minute detail may evoke totally different reactions.

Dr. McDougall's conclusion is best expressed in his own words: " The dominant part in the determination of the reaction is played by the meaning which the individual discovers in the sensory presentation, by the value which he attaches to this meaning, and by the relation of this value to his settled purposes. In short, throughout the scale of animal and human behaviour we see evidence that meaning, value, and purpose, of which we discern only doubtful traces at the bottom of the scale, play a part whose importance, relatively to the mechanical factors of reaction, constantly increases, until in human behaviour they dominate the scene. It is incumbent, then, on those who regard behaviour as mechanically explicable, to show how these factors, meaning, value, and purpose, may be mechanically conceived; yet how this demonstration is to be made, or can be at all possible, has not hitherto been even vaguely foreshadowed " (p. 271). The student who wishes to pursue the question cannot do better than make a careful study of McDougall's book, a closely written volume of 380 pages.

It is perhaps worth observing that Bergson, who holds a different theory of consciousness from that of McDougall, nevertheless agrees with his assertion that there is no evidence that the physical movements of the brain correspond accurately with the movements of thought. He regards the theory as purely metaphysical and lacking confirmation in

experience. He writes: " Certainly, the psychophysiologist who affirms the exact equivalence of the cerebral and the psychical state, who imagines the possibility, for some superhuman intellect, of reading in the brain what is going on in consciousness, believes himself very far from the metaphysicians of the seventeenth century, and very near to experience. Yet experience pure and simple tells us nothing of the kind. It shows us the interdependence of the mental and physical, the necessity of a certain cerebral substratum for the psychical state, nothing more. From the fact that two things are mutually dependent, it does not follow that they are equivalent. Because a certain screw is necessary to a certain machine, because the machine works when the screw is there and stops when the screw is taken away, we do not say that the screw is the equivalent of the machine. For correspondence to be equivalence, it would be necessary that to any part of the machine a definite part of the screw should correspond—as in a literal translation in which each chapter renders a chapter, each sentence a sentence, each word a word. Now, the relation of the brain to consciousness seems to be entirely different. Not only does the hypothesis of an equivalence between the psychical state and the cerebral state imply a downright absurdity, as we have tried to prove in a former essay, but the facts, examined without prejudice, certainly seem to indicate that the relation of the psychical to the physical is just that of the machine to the screw " (*Creative Evolution*, pp. 374, 375).

It may be said definitely that modern research has thrown as much light on the influence of the soul on the body, as of the body on the soul. Blindness, for example, can be induced by hypnotic suggestion, a blindness that can be tested by experiment and can only be removed by a counter-suggestion of the same kind. The union between soul and body is of the most intimate order, but it is certainly not one-sided. There are contributions from the mental side to the physical, just as truly as there are sensations that have their foundation in physical experiences and give rise to ideas. It is remarkable that here also the Bible conception, while it makes no pretence to anticipate the findings of experimental Psychology, regards the entire man, body and soul, as the unit, and looks upon the disembodied condition as a restriction of man's natural powers.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

ETHICAL SYSTEMS OF the past have their great names. But they stand to the developed theory more in the light of discoverers than in that of perfect exemplars. We can conceive that the moral teaching of Socrates, Plato or Aristotle would abide even if they themselves fell short of that which they have declared. It is otherwise with the Person of Christ. He embodies the ideal, and His teaching derives its force and inspiration from His character. This is relatively true of all men, but it is absolutely true of Him, and of Him alone. The peculiar feature of Christian Ethics in this regard is that it inspires personal devotion to One Who spake as never man spake, and Who passed through death into a fuller and wider existence in which He draws near in loving intimacy to the soul who trusts in Him.

It would be to miss altogether the special feature of the new force in humanity that centres in the Person of Christ, to place His teaching on a line with the teaching of other prophets, and claim for it superiority. That claim may be made with confidence. The best that our struggling humanity has achieved has been under the influence of the Lord's messages to men. But the nerve of Christian endeavour does not lie there. The fact which has been attested by the experience of thousands is the fact of a living union with our Lord Jesus Christ. People are apt to shrug their shoulders and say, "But this is simple mysticism." The answer is twofold. The mystic element in our nature demands recognition. If man by that avenue climbs to great heights of spiritual achievement, a mere designation of the method by naming it offers no help to a solution of the experience. In recent years, further, the term "mysticism" has been so extended as almost to evacuate it of meaning. Dean Inge, *e.g.*, defines mysticism as "the attempt to realise, in thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal

in the temporal." Again he says, "Mysticism appears as an independent active principle, the spirit of reformations and revivals" (*Christian Mysticism*, p. 5). But such a definition in its width of comprehension includes all vital movements in history. Nor is the scope greatly narrowed by Dean Inge's further expansion under the headings: "The soul can see and perceive," "Man in order to know God must be a partaker of the Divine Nature," "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," "The true hierophant of the mysteries of God is love."

There is some justification for Hodge's criticism: "The definitions of mysticism given by Rationalists are designedly so framed as to include what all evangelical Christians hold to be true concerning the illumination, teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit. . . . But different things should be designated by different words. There has been a religious theory, which has more or less extensively prevailed in the Church, which is distinguished from the Scriptural doctrine by unmistakable characteristics, and which is known in Church History as mysticism, and the word should be restricted to that theory. It is the theory, variously modified, that the knowledge, purity and blessedness to be derived from communion with God are not to be attained from the Scriptures and the use of the ordinary means of grace, but by a supernatural and immediate divine influence, which influence (or communication of God to the soul) is to be secured by a passivity, a simple yielding the soul without thought or effort to the divine influx" (*Systematic Theology*, vol. i, p. 64). James avoids the generalities which Hodge charges on the Rationalists, and into which both Dean Inge and Rufus Jones, to mention two modern expositors, have fallen. The student should study carefully the examination of the matter in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lectures XVI and XVIII.

The two features which attach to mysticism are "ineffability," the impossibility of imparting or transferring the knowledge gained, and "a noetic quality," a relation of the soul or mind to a wider universe of being than that which is attained by ordinary reflection. Besides these two features there are two others which belong to the experience. It is first of all transient. And secondly the individual is passive in the experience, "grasped and held by a superior power." James in his penetrating analysis

further points out: " The fact is that the mystical feeling of enlargement, union and emancipation has no specific intellectual content whatever of its own. It is capable of forming matrimonial alliances with material furnished by the most diverse philosophies and theologies, provided only they can find a place in their framework for its peculiar emotional mood."

The peculiar nature of mysticism makes precision of description extremely difficult, if not impossible. But such a measure of precision as has been indicated above is essential if we are not to wander over the whole field of experience dubbing elements here and there " mystical " because they appear to us " vital " or " transcendent," " illuminative " or " contemplative." The latter method of inquiry is the abandonment of all close investigation.

Taken in the sense which attaches to mysticism as a technical psychological experience, the living union with Jesus Christ our Lord to which He bears witness is not mystical. It is not transitory. There is, indeed, a " new birth " of the Spirit, but the new birth ushers us into a new and continuous existence. Whether the union with Christ is always present in consciousness or not, it remains as a residual fact of our being, a controlling principle never wholly absent from our reflection. Nor is it " noetic," in the sense that James attaches to that word. For though union with Christ gives us a true insight into the things of God, its tendency is to become more and more articulate. The reality is beyond our best attempt at apprehension, yet it is not our ecstatic mood but a sober controlling fact in experience. It is connected with the " mystic " feeling in carrying a sense of authority, but it is not at variance with our intellectual aspirations. It has been stated, and can be understood even though the statement is something short of reality. Is not all statement in our present condition subject to this limitation ? But the two features of mysticism proper that most clearly differentiates it from " the mystical union betwixt Christ and His church " are found in the negative character of the former in contrast to the positive character of the latter, and the passivity of the former in contrast to the activity of the latter. Genuine mysticism in the accepted sense of the term which we have adopted inevitably leads to dualism and asceticism. It calls on the votary to despise and disregard the things of time and

sense. There is, of course, a very true meaning in this call, but not in the sense of a mystic translation into another sphere of being. Union with Christ irradiates the whole of life for us, and makes the commonplace a road to glory.

The difference might be stated in the following terms: mysticism in its historic sense is an attempt to attain for a short time a sense of absolute union with the infinite that lies at the heart of things. The mystic union with Christ realised by faith, and procured by the operation of the Spirit of God in the individual consciousness, secures that union as a real ever-present fact. It does not divorce the subject from the business of ordinary life in order to secure a passing feeling of absorption. On the contrary, it brings every fact of everyday life under the all-compelling influence of this true union, so that to some extent now the finite creature has, and finally in full perfection will have, the mind of Christ.

When we look at the matter from this standpoint, the authority which our Lord possesses is closely allied to the enabling which He supplies. As authoritative, He is our Exemplar, "leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps." But, as the basis of our new life, Christ, formed in us, is at once the impulse towards attainment and a guarantee of successful endeavour. Hence the Christian system declares that, apart from Christ, we can do nothing. It is not merely a code of morals, though it is that, but it is a re-creation of the individual and a real indwelling of Him in Whom we live and move and have our being, that produces the needed power to achieve righteousness. In this way the antinomy between an outward command which seems foreign to our individuality, and the inward response which is purely an act of our will, is resolved. We do not see this as yet in completion, because we are warned that there are alien elements in our imperfectly redeemed being. St. Paul tells us that the Christian groans within himself, waiting for the adoption—to wit, the redemption of the body. But the very groan of the Christian is in itself evidence that his inner aspirations are now directed heavenward, and that he must inevitably press towards the mark for the prize for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is thus that the message and example of Christ become truly ours. There is that within us wrought by the living

Spirit of God that causes us to recognise our true destiny in the idea of a kingdom of righteousness.

Rational systems of Ethics would attribute to reason very much the place that is here given to the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, as we have already seen, in order to do so Rational Ethics has largely to ignore the strange inability which besets mankind. When it does take up the problem, as in the case of Kant, it finds itself unable to do more than assert that bad maxims have been taken up into the will. It tells us that it is our duty to ignore and repudiate such maxims, but the motive power is lacking. On the Christian system, the Fall is offered as an explanation of the fact of the bad maxims. The New Testament does not hesitate to declare that as a consequence of man's original wilful transgression, reason itself, while it still witnesses to a better condition of affairs, is powerless to achieve the happy result which it envisages.

Hence we are presented with an external power, the power of God revealed in Jesus Christ, through submission to which our weakness becomes strong. The majesty of the presentation lies in the fact that this external power is also presented to us as the source of our being. God, as the living Person, is greater than human reason since He is the inspirer of it. There is thus an adequate ground afforded for the hope of complete redemption. Apart from this, man can only struggle blindly, apprehending a better condition of affairs in his moments of calm judgment, only to fall victim in all his activities to the irrational impulses that have secured dominance through the Fall.

The Ethical Teaching of our Lord

We turn now to consider the place which must be given in any system of Ethics to our Lord's teaching. One of the most remarkable features about the teaching of Jesus is its comparatively small content. Socrates in the old world laid down certain principles of action, but it might be said that they would have been lost to the world were it not for their skilful elaboration at the hands of Plato. Plato has so interwoven the teaching of his master with his own, that it is not always easy to distinguish the true Socrates. Something similar has taken place in relation to the teaching

of our Lord, and yet the remarkable fact is that His messages, notwithstanding that they have received extensive elaboration in the Apostolic company, stand out clear-cut and well defined.

There are those, of course, who would dissent from this position, and would maintain that the Gospels are products of later reflection, and that we cannot be sure that we have embodied in them the genuine sayings of the Master. A full discussion of this position would take us far from the field of Ethics into the region of contemporary literary criticism, but it is obvious to even a superficial student that the early Christians attached profound significance to the sayings of their Lord, and in the parables and the synopses of the discourses which He delivered we can trace the foundation of all the later developments. It is necessary only to read the Gospels and the later Epistles of St. Paul to recognise that though the Pauline theory stands in a place by itself, yet over against it, as determining its main lines, stand those immortal utterances which are declared to be the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.

There is not the interweaving which we observe in the Platonic presentation of Socratic ideas. The thought moulds of the parables, for example, are wholly different from the thought moulds of the Apostle, and yet, wholly different as they are, they contain, in simple but arresting form, the very essential truths that shape themselves in characteristic fashion in the mind of St. Paul. The same is true, *e.g.*, of the Epistle of James, which is most reminiscent of the sayings of our Lord, but in which these sayings appear in a different form as they pass through the mind of the Lord's brother. This is a literary appearance that becomes evident the moment attention has been directed to it. As Dr. Sanday expresses it: "The two streams, of historical narrative on the one hand and theological inference on the other, really run side by side. They do not exclude but rather supplement, and indeed critically confirm, each other. For if the Gospels had been really not genuine histories of the words and acts of Christ, but coloured products of the age succeeding His death, we may be sure that they would have reflected the characteristic attitude of that age far more than they do. They do not reflect it, but they do account for it by those delicate hints and subtly inwoven intimations that He

Who called Himself so persistently Son of Man was also Son of God" (*Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. ii, p. 649).

When we study the teaching of our Lord, it is clear that we are not presented with a definite philosophical system. The language is simple, and it is not surprising to read that the common people heard Him gladly. It is a mark of true genius to state profound things in a simple form, and the parables of Jesus particularly would earn immortality if only that aspect demanded attention. It would be a grave mistake, however, to assume that because the teaching is not cast in the language of the philosophers there are no distinct principles running through it. On the contrary, there are several outstanding elements that immediately arrest attention. No doubt various minds will variously interpret these outstanding elements, but a study of different analyses of our Lord's teaching is sufficient to establish the fact that there is an inner core which binds all the sayings into a unity. The sayings are so comprehensive that any one category cannot exhaust them. The attempt to do so may be said to be the chief defect of the so-called Eschatological school.

For Ethics, the following principles demand close attention. The other world was real to our Lord. He moved freely amongst men, yet never lost touch with heaven. This appears over and over again in His sayings. The Sermon on the Mount emphasises the spiritual blessings that are alone true beatitudes. To see God, to possess the kingdom of heaven, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to be children of God, these are the aims which are set before the sons of men in that sublime message, which perhaps more than any other has gripped the popular imagination, though it has often been misunderstood. The reality of God, and the possibility of communion with Him, are acknowledged in the teaching, but are more clearly exemplified in the life of our Lord. He Who spends a night in prayer on the eve of every momentous decision teaches us by that action, more definitely than any form of words could convey, that there is an all-controlling purpose of God, which is revealed to those who seek His face.

The reality of sin and retribution also find their place in the teaching of Jesus Christ. Some years ago, in connection with the controversies that arose over what has been called the "Larger Hope," Keble, supporting

Dr. Pusey, gave a litany to the world composed entirely of the stern sayings of Jesus Christ. It astonished many superficial readers of the Gospel to discover that the severest indictments of sin, and the most awful warnings concerning the inevitable consequences of transgression, fell from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At times, it seems as if the Master is insensible of the evils round about Him. He declines to adjudicate in a family quarrel over property. He returns what seems to be an evasive answer to the question Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar or no? But closer examination reveals the fact that the burden of His message is ever directed to secure internal conformity to the mind and will of God, and that He seeks to dissuade men from entering upon pathways of external reform only where the redress of grievances is viewed as the end and the spiritual goal of man. Our Lord does not hesitate to deal with current abuses where these impinge upon the inner life of the soul. He is severe on hypocrisy. He recognises that even the Mosaic law had to be tempered to the poor conceptions of those whom God sought to lift to higher things. He gives rules, or rather principles, for our relations to our neighbour, for the guidance of family life, for a true valuation of the office of the State, which have supplied the key to the more developed teaching on these matters that are found in the Epistles. It will be our task to deal with some of these aspects in the later portion of the book. It is well, however, to keep even an imperfect summary clear before our minds, as very often we are in danger of failing to see the wood for the trees.

It must be borne in mind that our Lord exercised His ministry as a Jew amongst Jews. It is sometimes forgotten that the very fact that the incarnate Son of God entered into the conditions of human life amongst those who had been the recipients of an older revelation stamps that revelation with authority. The Greek Ethics has helped us to understand our inner nature. The Roman genius for jurisprudence has laid firm foundations for our social and State life. But the Son of God appeared neither as a Greek nor a Roman. He came in the fulness of time for those who were familiar with the call of Abraham, and He came to sit upon the throne of David. He interprets for us the old messages of God to man with a clearness hitherto unknown. But we must ever bear in mind the complementary truth,

that it is these old messages that are seized upon in the purpose of God to help us to interpret the Divine Son.

A modern phase of thought has taken possession of those who are quite gifted both in the literary and theological worlds. We find a passing reference to it, for example, in the writings of Professor Quiller-Couch, whose mastery of English has won for him a deserved entrance into many homes. The phase to which we refer is the suggestion that the God of the Old Testament is really a tribal God, invested with all the vindictive characteristics that belong to the tribal condition of humanity. It is contended that in Jesus Christ, and in Him only, have we learnt to understand that God is our Father. It seems a fitting reply to this theory to point out that it is singularly absent from the consciousness of Jesus. The many pointed references to the Old Testament that are found in His writings show that He was nurtured upon that sacred Book, dear to the heart of every Jew. He moves with ease through its pages, and emphasises again and again its morality. It is true that He places a much higher interpretation on the old Law than can be found in the writings of its professed exponents. He lays a greater emphasis on the duty towards God than the current theology of His time would admit. *E.g.*, He scornfully rejects the subterfuge that money which should be spent on the succour of aged parents can be diverted without loss to the service of the sanctuary. He sees in the Old Testament conceptions a binding of God and man together, that the dull eyes of the scribes had never seen. But when all this is admitted, the authority of the Old Testament is to Him sacred. The precepts given to Moses, particularly where they touch upon inner moral duties, are inviolable. We are prepared to insist that our Lord's attitude to the Law of Moses was not one of contradiction, but one of a deeper and truer interpretation, which threw into bold relief the inner springs of conduct, and demanded their purification if God were to be adequately served.

In this connection it may be advisable to offer an explanation of the much canvassed question as to our Lord's attitude as revealed in the Sermon on the Mount.

Many modern expositors assure us that here we are in possession of a reversal of the ancient code, a reversal imposed by Divine authority centring in the Person of

our Lord. But when we examine the Sermon on the Mount, the first thing that strikes us is that it opens with a direct assertion that not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled. The teacher does not usually begin by endorsing the code which he intends to correct. The impression made on his hearers would tend to defeat his object if he opened in this fashion. We notice that our Divine Lord is fully sensible of the necessity of placing Himself *en rapport* with His hearers. He was talking to Jews, who had for centuries reverenced the Law as a direct message of God to their nation. He begins by endorsing this judgment. Sufficient attention has not been paid to this fact. When we examine the teaching that is supposed to have superseded the old Law, we find that there is but one direct reference to the express words of the Old Testament, the "*lex talionis*," "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." The other references are to interpretations which obviously suggest that a measure of external conformity is all that is necessary to meet God's holy demands.

Abraham Kuyper in dealing with these passages declares: "He does not oppose His Gospel as a superior code of morals to the antiquated and inferior Mosaic code, but it is His aim, by opposing the *false interpretations* of Moses by the liberal, rabbinical schools, to restore the Mosaic law to its *legitimate position*. . . . From verse 20 (For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven) it is clear that He opposes, not the *righteousness of Moses*, but the *false interpretation* of it by the liberal rabbis."

Kuyper instances the words "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy," and pertinently asks: "Did you ever find this in the Old Testament? Indeed not; on the contrary, in Prov. xxv. 21 it reads: 'If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink'; and in Exod. xxiii. 3, 4, Israel was taught: 'If thou meet thine enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.' Hence it is unfair to say that the Old Testament teaches a low and unholy morality, for it inculcates the very opposite" (*The Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 571).

The passage to which attention has been directed above seems to run counter to this interpretation. Here we have the very words of Scripture apparently corrected, and by implication condemned. Our Lord says, " Resist not evil," and claims that this is a higher principle than that embodied in the words, " An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But when we turn back to the Old Testament, there is at least a reasonable interpretation of this difference. In the Old Testament the words occur as the principle of judicial retribution. They relate to penalties inflicted in the course of law by proper authority. The importation of such a principle into private life would be an entire misconception of the object of the legislation. We are familiar in our own day with the objection about taking the law into our own hands. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that what our Lord was seeking to inculcate was that judicial proceedings belong to an imperfect state of morality. They implied that there had been a violation of the law. The cultivation of a spirit of meekness, a willingness to endure evil, would do more to render unnecessary the imposition of a penal code than the carrying into private life of that principle of vengeance, which in the interests of the State had already been reserved to competent authority.

This line of interpretation is supported by the injunction regarding swearing. The old Law insisted that a vow to God should be fulfilled. We can scarcely imagine that the Master, Who laid down so emphatically the obligation to confess Him before men, would remove this moral duty from the pathway of His followers. What He does do is to say that there is an internal condition when the oath will be no longer necessary. If all men let their yea be yea, and their nay, nay, the inner principle of the law would be completely fulfilled, and the oath demanded would fall away as an unnecessary externalisation. That our Lord presented this as an ideal condition may be further gathered from the fact that when He Himself was solemnly put on oath He did not decline to answer.

But it is not sufficient for us to content ourselves with saying that the Sermon on the Mount is simply an ideal. A school of thought has arisen, different from that which we have been discussing, and which places the whole code as expounded by Jesus in a future kingdom which He shall bring in. In consequence it relieves His followers

at the present time of any real obligation to seek to attain to that spiritual condition here portrayed. This is a very serious evil, as it places the ideal wholly in the future, and leaves us with a sense of freedom in relation to it which would defeat the very purpose of our Lord's commands. May we not say that He intended to show us how far we were from fulfilling the injunctions of the old law, and also how much further from that condition when we should be like God, true laws to ourselves, actuated entirely by the purity of inner motives, requiring no external example, compelled by no imperative injunction? But He does not set this before us as something that will be perfectly realised in the future, and is in no sense operative in the present. Rather He points the way to holiness, in order that, more and more seeking the aid of the Divine Spirit, we may conform ourselves to this perfect standard.

We may compare the relation of the Sermon on the Mount to ordinary experience as the relation of growth to the attainment of full stature. It would be madness, if it were in our power, to stop growing until the age was reached when our stature would be normally complete, and expect to be suddenly translated from an infant to a grown man. It is equally fatal to put moral ideals in an unrealised future. They are given to us in order that we may grow into them, and the very fact that they lie before us is one of the prime conditions of our development to that measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, in which the ideal shall be in all respects realised. The Sermon on the Mount binds Christians. And it binds them all the more securely because they are conscious of their failure to realise it. There is progress in the Christian life, and progress implies at least a dim apprehension of the goal towards which we tend.

Our Lord did not, therefore, reject the Law of Moses, nor did He contradict it in any particular. But He developed its underlying teaching with a completeness hitherto unsuspected by its most ardent advocates. He combated the idea that it was an external and ceremonial code, and applied it with penetrating force to our inner thought and life. There are further hints here and there, as in the discussion on marriage, which enable us to see that our Lord held that the exact form of the commandments, and some of the concessions which were made in the old Law, took shape, not because they reflected the full purpose of

God, but because they were adapted to the needs of a struggling people surrounded with moral problems, and themselves emerging from a condition of heathenism into which they had been plunged by the pressure of their environment. Moses, He says, permitted the writing of divorcement for the hardness of men's hearts. It is strange that in the discussion of the vexed problems of divorce, which falls for consideration later, immense attention has been devoted to the authenticity of the exceptive clause, and but very little to this illuminating revelation regarding the relation of a moral code to the particular needs of any community. Close attention to this aspect would prove of great help in the investigation of that much abused term, " progressive revelation." As Dr. Orr puts it: " In general, then, we perceive that revelation, without parting with anything of its reality or authority, is, in the truest sense, an organic process—a growing from less to more, with adaptation at every point to the stage of development of its recipients—a light shining often in a *dark* place, but still shining more and more unto the perfect day. Its higher stages criticise, if we may so speak, its lower; shed off temporary elements; disengage principles from the imperfect forms in which they are embodied, and give them more perfect expression; yet unfailingly conserve, and take up into the new form, every element of permanent value in the old. Prophecy does not let fall one element that was of permanent value in the law; Christianity conserves every jot and tittle of the spiritual content of both law and prophets " (*Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 476-477).

The new principle which shines out most clearly in our Lord's teaching, though by no means absent from the Old Testament morality, is the essential inwardness of true moral living. It is the thought and emotional life of His hearers to which our Lord devotes attention, " Out of the heart proceeds," etc. This was never wholly absent from ethical teaching, as has been shown in the brief résumé of the various systems, but it stands out with a uniqueness and definiteness of its own in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In order to make this clear, it may be well to examine more closely our Lord's statements on the subject of love to our neighbour. Green has suggested that the whole of our ethical development may be traced to our deepening

of the conceptions conveyed in great ethical terms—*e.g.*, a Greek regarded his neighbour as one who had the full authority of the freeborn citizen. Plato writes: "In the matter of love we may be able to enforce . . . that no one shall venture to touch any person of the freeborn or noble class except his wedded wife" (*Laws*, viii, 841). When our Lord is challenged as to the explanation of the word "neighbour," He replies with the parable of the Good Samaritan. Anyone to whom we can show compassion, anyone who is in need, constitutes in his misery or destitution an immediate ethical obligation for us. So He points out that we should love our enemies and do good to them that hate us or despitefully use us. Even moral obliquity should evoke compassion, while at the same time our compassion should not be free from indignation against the evil. Yet again, this obligation of love extends to the duty of avoiding occasion for stumbling. We must not offend the little ones who believe in Christ. This, indeed, is regarded as a sin of greater magnitude than many which have invited the censure of past-time moralists. It emphasises at once our social obligations and points the way to a solution of many difficulties.

What are called "doubtful cases," problems regarding those general activities that in their objectionable form are classed together under the comprehensive term "worldliness," here find solution. That which hinders the spiritual development of others becomes not only undesirable but reprehensible in a follower of the Master. Our Lord's continual denunciation of hypocrisy may also come properly under the general law of love. We owe our brother the truth, and truth extends to words and acts and thoughts alike. As Dr. Charles expresses it: "Nor can truth of thought live and thrive in the hearts of men whose main principle in life is expediency and safety. For the desires for truth and safety must sooner or later come into collision. It is then that the so-called safe men, who are so often leaders in Church and State, must, so far as their influence extends, prove to be the ruin of both; for these safe men are seldom to be found amongst the small and noble fellowship of those whose sole aim is truth in and for itself" (*The Decalogue*, p. 102). Closely associated with this inward hypocrisy which conceals truth or declines to acknowledge its sway is the outward avarice which directs the mind

and heart to the accumulation of wealth. Our Lord could say, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God," warning us that our neighbour's interests become lost in the selfish rush for gold. We forget the weightier matters of the law, and lay up treasure for ourselves upon earth.

Out of the central principle of love these affirmations and negations naturally arise. It is for this reason that He makes the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And in close connection with this moral development, surely the constant injunctions to be meek and lowly in heart, to seek no great things for ourselves, to be content to take the lowly place, to be as He was amongst others as those who serve, must find a place. If, as the Apostle later developed the theme, love seeketh not her own, then the truly loving soul is the truly humble. Our Lord's great gesture exemplified the relation of these two principles and was so apprehended by the disciple whom Jesus loved. It is he who tells us that, "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end," and found expression for His love in a gracious act of ministration, in itself so lowly that it usually formed part of a slave's task. He took a towel and girded Himself, and washed their feet. Thus He offered to His disciples in all ages a supreme example of the nobility of service and the effectiveness of true humility.

One other fact needs to be noted in connection with our Lord's teaching. His Ethics and His Theology very largely coincide. It is the custom in some quarters at present to assert that Ethics as a science is wholly independent of Theology. Religion is regarded along the lines of the eighteenth-century definition, as morality touched with emotion, and scientifically, Ethics is supposed, not indeed to eliminate the emotion, but to give a psychological explanation of it, so that the ethical content is devoid itself of this element. To put it in another way, it is admitted that emotion is necessary to secure a release of activity. It is impulse and not theory that influences the will. But the broad principles of human conduct can be outlined quite apart from any question of their operation in the experience of an individual, and this is the province of the ethical teacher. Question-begging phrases are often introduced to buttress this theory. For instance, we are

sometimes told that the cold-blooded scientists of the Victorian era are much superior to the fervent religious person. The reason given is that these imaginary characters have pursued truth for truth's sake and virtue for virtue's sake, and have not been deflected by any imagined theory of advantage in connection with truth, or of reward and punishment in connection with virtue. Statements of this kind should be avoided by the careful student. Quite apart from the fact, which is perhaps gratifying, that scientists are very ordinary human beings apart from their science, and are not insensible either to advantage or reward, the whole theory begs the important question as to the relation between truth and advantage and virtue and reward. The plausibility of the argument resides solely in the fact that the propounder first separates the element of advantage or the element of reward from the issue that emerges in the pursuit of truth or virtue, and, having made the separation (which has no logical justification), proceeds forthwith to attach a base meaning to advantage and reward, identifying them with a selfish interest. This may be useful in rhetoric, and may catch the ear of the multitude for a short period, but it is not scientific, and should therefore be rigidly eschewed. It is, of course, an interesting question whether morality could survive if an æsthetic base were clearly established. But the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ never for one moment contemplates such a possibility. He sets before His hearers as a true motive for conduct that they might be children of their Father Who is in heaven, and it is not necessary to develop the important theological conceptions which alone give meaning to the injunction.

In His own life He constantly exercises the gift of prayer, seeking for Divine guidance in every important crisis. Again, there are profound theological implicates in His action. So far from excluding the conception of rewards and punishment, on which contempt has been poured in modern times, He gives the idea a very prominent place in His system. It takes two forms. Very frequently inevitable consequences are presented in this character. The fate of the seed depends upon the condition of the ground, the blessings of life are connected with the inner character of the individual. In yet another aspect, the fact that even such inevitable consequences are due to the reaction of a

holy Personality other than man is powerfully portrayed. The wicked husbandmen are visited with the consequences of their deeds. The guests who make excuses are excluded from the banquet. Nor can we say that such teaching is simply in the nature of a powerful figure in which consequences are given a more vivid character by being associated with personal activity. In our Lord's non-parabolic teaching the same truth emerges—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"—"Whosoever believeth shall not perish"—"Whither I go, ye cannot come."

When we sum up these various statements, which can be extended to other areas of the moral life, we are forced to the conclusion that the heart of the ethical teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ lies in His strong conviction that we stand in an eternal relation to the Source of all being. He Himself had a continuous consciousness of the presence of God, and an abiding sense of responsibility towards the Divine will. In the hour of His agony the dominant motive of His life finds expression in the prayer, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt." It is not too much, therefore, to say that if we are to understand the ethical teaching of the Master, we must place ourselves at His theological standpoint. It is surely a matter of significance in this connection that the release of moral activity has always been associated with religious principles, and the highest moral achievements as yet registered have been connected with a humble following of the Saviour, not only in matters of conduct, but in the deeper truth that enables men to realise that they can perform their actions "ever in the great Taskmaster's eye."

The question may arise, If Jesus Christ, His person and teaching, be taken as the last word in Ethics, how do we relate His messages to the later contents of the New Testament? Here again a modern movement has originated with a cry of "Back to the Christ of the Gospels." It is one of the ironies of history that the search for the historic Christ has been undertaken by those whose interest frequently seems to be to reduce the historic picture to the very scantiest outline. Sometimes, when learned productions dealing with questions of this sort are studied, the reader is left in a state of perplexity. He is not quite sure whether the author is anxious to depreciate the authority of the Apostles, or to emphasise the authority of the Christ. He

reads, *e.g.*, that our Lord had a very simple system, that He believed in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and was content to leave all acute problems on one side. The impression left on the mind is that Jesus Christ was amiable and devout, but in no sense analytical or reflective. The parallel has even been drawn between the joyousness of Francis d'Assisi and the same simple outlook on nature in Jesus. Francis looked on the birds as his brothers and preached to fishes, and the Master said, "Behold the fowls of the air." It is not necessary to deny that within limits the joyousness of Francis also finds its place in the teaching of Jesus, but it would be a fatal error to assume that this superficial attitude to the things of life exhausts the content of our Lord's teaching. On the contrary, men have pondered for centuries on the meaning of some of His words, and the more they have pondered, the more profound have even His simple utterances appeared. We need to preserve a balance in these matters, and to remember continually that the inner core of Christ's teaching is never reached until we apprehend the sublime fact that He was in close touch with two worlds, and in His consciousness many of the anomalies with which we are confronted find perfect solution as part of the unfolding programme of the Divine. He deals with topics that demand the fullest powers of reflection, and He deals with them in masterly simplicity.

But if we are unable to detach from the teaching of Christ important theological elements, the question of the Apostolic development becomes more insistent. Let it be conceded that the cry of "Back to the Christ of the Gospels" has been interpreted in an arbitrary fashion. Is there not still a certain cogency in the demand? If we contend that our Lord gave us a theology, does not that make the appeal still more cogent? The answer is not easy. Anyone who looks for easy answers to foundation questions has little experience either of life or protracted thought. But we can find at least a partial solution in the fact that our Lord's death stood in a peculiar relation to His life. It was necessary that He should offer Himself as a sacrifice if the full implicates of His moral teaching were to be understood. In the very nature of the case extended exposition on the meaning of His death would be undesirable, if not impossible, until the death had actually taken place.

In the Gospel story we read that our Lord on three occasions referred to His betrayal and crucifixion, and on each occasion the Apostles failed to understand His meaning. Such references were necessary in order that the foundation of the later message should consist in the teaching of the Master. The inability of the Apostles to understand supplies a reason for the later more extended references. Our Lord's sayings became intelligible when the fact of His death shed light upon His meaning. It was further inevitable that the later writers should express, in terms of their own experience, the results of the moral teaching which they had received.

The developed messages in the later books of the New Testament are therefore of importance in two directions:

(i) They illustrate for us the reactions in practical life that resulted from whole-hearted submission to the teaching of Jesus. St. Paul expresses this when he speaks of the Romans " obeying from the heart " the mould into which they had been delivered. The simile is an expressive one. The fluid stream of their life was directed and fashioned by the shape of the early messages, and as a result a fixed character is discernible, bearing in its features clear evidence of contact with the higher morality that came through submission to the Son of God.

(ii) They frequently inform the student as to the precise significance of fragmentary utterances that might otherwise be difficult of apprehension. We have often to ask ourselves, " What did the message of Jesus mean to those who heard Him ?" The answer to this question is found in what we may call the collective consciousness of the apostolic band. Let it be conceded that these early followers did not always fully conceive the inner meaning of the Saviour's words. That is a disability that they share with us, but they possess an advantage over us in that they are resident in the very environment in which the words found expression, and therefore they illustrate more forcibly than we could the immediate effect in transforming that environment. Further, the extent to which they developed the teaching of Jesus was controlled by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and was suited not only to their own age, but laid down principles that must govern the formulation of Christian thought in all ages. Apart from the Apostolic expansion the teaching of the Gospels would not have

received that practical illustration which is absolutely necessary for the full presentation of the ideals of the Kingdom of God. As has been suggested above, the idea of a real contradiction between the Gospel message and the Apostolic deposit cannot be substantiated. They stand in the relation of an ever-growing process, with this added consideration, that the process reached its culmination in the life and teaching of the Son of God, so that the humbler but equally necessary duty of interpretation becomes the portion of the Apostolic writers.

The Importance of the Work of Christ and Justification

If a system of Ethics is to be erected which has as its final base the unalterable will of God, a most urgent question presents itself—namely, "How are those relations between God and man to be secured that will enable a sinful being to fulfil the Divine purpose?" At the very heart of the theory there lies the revelation of God's purity and holiness that must be conceived as inevitable, issuing in a Divine reaction against sin. This fact has been obscured in modern times by a misdirected philanthropy, which addresses itself to the removal of existing social evils, but never penetrates to the deeper fact of God's relation to the evil itself. Men are content with amelioration, and do not press forward to the idea of regeneration. We are often betrayed by happy phrases that embody a partial truth. It is frequently said, *e.g.*, that God hates the sin but loves the sinner. The underlying idea is easily grasped, but very few pause to consider what is the precise meaning of a sin apart from a sinner. Sin appears as an alien element affecting a helpless victim, and the element of personal acquiescence in the evil is depreciated or ignored.

It is exceedingly difficult to interpret Scripture along the lines of this popular proverb. Psalm vii. 11, to take but one illustration, combines the two ideas that God is a righteous Judge, and that He is angry with the wicked man. Whatever solution may be found that will reconcile God's love and justice, the method of separating sin and the sinner is not adequate for this purpose. Calvin expresses it in the following sentences: "'Therefore our reconciliation by the death of Christ must not be understood

as if He reconciled us to God, that God might begin to love those whom He had before hated: but we are reconciled to Him Who already loved us, but with Whom we were at enmity on account of sins. . . . He loved us, therefore, even when we were in the exercise of enmity against Him, and engaged in the practice of iniquity. Wherefore, in a wonderful and divine manner, He both hated and loved us at the same time. He hated us, as being different from what He had made us; but as our iniquity had not entirely destroyed His work in us, He could at the same time in every one of us hate what we had done, and love what proceeded from Himself.' This is the language of Augustine" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, chapter xvi, section iv).

If, therefore, it is held that the base of all true Ethics is found in the holy nature of God, Who must react against sin, the immediate problem that confronts us is, "How can a man be just before God?" So far from the doctrine of justification offering no assistance to the solution of moral conduct, it must lie at the very foundation of our code. Until the problem of right relations has been solved, there can be no progress in true morality. We may say that the problem thus conceived is double-edged. Two great demands present themselves: (i) The demand that God's inviolable holiness shall be adequately preserved, as otherwise the base of our system is found faulty. (ii) That man shall be relieved of the conscious burden of his transgressions, which pressses as a continual weight and occasions him to despair of achievement.

It is the glory of the Christian system that it grapples with this problem, and delivers us from an apparently impossible situation. Those who have not reflected upon the question of justification, particularly in the form of justification by faith only, may be disposed to regard it as a matter lying outside the scope of ethical theory and practice. But the more the moral holiness of God is placed in bold relief, the more necessary does some such system appear. The essence of sin lies in alienation from God. The description of the wicked in the Old Testament is that God is not in all their thoughts. The charge made against the children of Israel is, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face so that He cannot hear." In such presentations

sin is regarded as dislocation. Man is separated from the true source of his being, and forced to develop along lines that are contrary to the original purpose for which he was created. Until there is a restoration of harmony there cannot be progress in spirituality. But the question becomes acute when he has recognised that this false line of development is at once the sinful act and the Divine retribution on sin. Most of our difficulties arise from separating cause and consequences. The sin is regarded as one thing, and the Divine wrath as another. From one point of view this is true, but as the Divine wrath is also the Divine reason, the inevitability of the relation must be kept clearly in mind. My sin separates me from God, and God's judgment on my sin is precisely that separation.

Unless, therefore, some method can be devised that will retain the inevitability of the connection and yet enable the sinner to find acceptance with God, and thus restore the harmony, there can be no release of Divine power in the individual soul, making the person conformable to the Divine will. Were moral conduct and moral responsibility alike bound up completely within the circle of individuality, it would seem to follow that each man should bear his own guilt, and that there could be no escape from the judgment of God. But moral responsibility, even in human affairs, overleaps the bounds of individuality. There are many examples of it. The rash financier involves the innocent in his crash. The generous philanthropist opens a door of hope to the suffering and the sinful. Our acts determine the circumstances of others, and contribute to general well- or ill-being. The greatest good of the greatest number, which is the moral force, as we saw, behind Utilitarianism, would be without meaning unless there were such a thing as the common good, and this common good realised in an individual affects the other members of the race.

It is not surprising, therefore, that God, in His infinite mercy, lays hold of this characteristic, and by drawing near in Person to our human conditions, takes to Himself our responsibilities, bears our sins in His Own body on the tree. As a consequence, Divine justice is more fully realised than is possible in the case of man, who is made in the image of God. Much speculation has centred on the contention that a finite offering cannot possibly exhaust the magnitude of offences, infinite or almost infinite in

character. How, it has been argued, could three hours' suffering atone for thousands of years of guilt? Such speculations are based on the crude idea that so much sin must merit so much punishment. Our clumsy systems of human law, where there is little relation between the offence and the punishment, render such speculations at once plausible and attractive. But if we lift our mind to the concept of an inevitable relation, then at once the position of the Sufferer, Who united in His Person the Divine and human natures, becomes of tremendous importance.

It is necessary for us to remember that the Christian system is not based on the possibility of one man atoning for the sins of another. Indeed, such an idea is deliberately excluded: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is costly, and must be let alone for ever" (Psa. xlix. 7-8, R.V.). The presentation that is so sublime is the fact that God, the offended One, entered into a particular relation with man, the offender, and through that act of gracious condescension assumed responsibility, and removed the barrier of estrangement, satisfying in His Personality, which was both Divine and human, for the guilt, and thus secured the possibility of that essential harmony which restores the soul to fellowship with Himself. The New Testament seeks to explain for us the meaning of this individual relation. Its consequence in our lives forms the burden of New Testament ethical teaching.

There are two elements that are given prominence from the second or human side of this great transaction. Over and over again in varied language the message assures us that through the atoning sacrifice of Christ there is release from what ethical students call "the bad conscience."

It is a peculiarity of sinfulness that it tends to propagate itself. Travellers in the East sometimes point out that the last stage of degradation, when a man of European civilisation "goes native," is when he no longer troubles to brush the flies from his face. The suggestion in the illustration is that the last link with his old life and traditions has been completely severed. He no longer looks for any possible restoration. A deep despair has settled upon his spirit. When the despair becomes deepest, he loses even a consciousness that he has surrendered his old ideals, he has become entirely one with the new conditions, and they

have completely mastered him. Something analogous takes place in the human soul. The burden of guilt is felt, and it continues to press with increasing heaviness. Resistance only makes the yoke harder, and the soul ceases to resist. A great sense of uselessness settles upon the spirit. The idea may be awakened that the past is not irremediable, that there is some way of escape from this ever-pressing burden, and with the awakening of the idea hope rises once more, the first step towards emancipation. The New Testament exhortations which assure us that when we were dead in sins we were quickened, that when we had no hope and were without God in the world the message of pardon came to us, provides exactly the stimulus that a despairing soul needs. To put the matter in still simpler form, there is an answer to the accusations of conscience, and because there is an answer, sin has no longer dominion over us.

The other element is that this message of hope, when it is apprehended, creates a revolt against the old estate. This is a common experience also of those who have been restored to any lost position. The prodigal thinks, "I will arise and go to my father," and a deep loathing for his present condition accompanies his new-found resolution. It is impossible to face towards the Celestial City without hating the City of Destruction from which we set out. It is thus that the Apostle in his great argument in the Epistle to the Romans presents the position, "How shall we who have died to sin live any longer therein?" There is here a psychological experience which can be exemplified in many tracts of human activity. The thing that makes the object desirable is that, for the time being at all events, we identify the object with ourselves. This is true of the great change in conversion. The dominant aim in life is identical with the new aspiration, and we cannot brook anything which imperils a complete fulfilment of our desires. When the soul, therefore, is awakened to the possibility of deliverance through the burden being borne and the guilt being met, it is a necessary condition of such an awakening that the old life from which emancipation is offered should appear in the character of unloveliness. It is impossible to identify our good with deliverance, and at the same time to cherish regard for the tyrant from whom we seek to be delivered. St. Paul illustrates this under the figure of the two masters.

Once the fruitlessness of sin becomes a dominant conviction, it is impossible for the sinner to submit with cheerfulness to its control. Of course, in the Apostle's argument, until he reaches the seventh chapter of Romans, the case is presented after this simple fashion. It has to be modified by the reflection that, notwithstanding our emancipation, we find a law in our members warring against the law of our minds. But this is a fact of experience that does not destroy the value of the spiritual reaction, but only increases the difficulty of making it complete. The enabling of the Spirit, which is a portion of the gift secured to us in consequence of our individual relation to God, is a guarantee of final victory even over resident powers of evil.

The doctrine of justification by faith thus appears as a perfect ethical motive. It has value because it places the supreme will of God in the right position. It has further value because it represents us as earnestly seeking the fulfilment of that will, and represents God as meeting our inability with a provision that could be found only in the depths of the Divine nature. Self-interest is no longer the dominant principle in our conduct. We have been brought face to face with God, we have trembled before a sense of the inevitableness of His judgment, we have been quickened to hope through the revelation that He has found a ransom, we have been stirred to a loathing of our old condition and induced to yield our members as servants to righteousness. We have peace with God.

The Contrast between Natural Ethics and Christian Ethics

When the position that has been outlined is clearly understood, the contrast between Natural and Christian Ethics is more readily appreciated. Natural Ethics is unable to rise higher than the idea of human self-interest. No doubt, philosophically, the propounders of Naturalistic Ethics, as expressed, for example, by Green, are able to posit an Eternal Consciousness, and if we eliminate completely those portions of Christian thought which have been cheerfully adopted in the system, the general appeal of such ethical systems is one of Pantheism. We only secure release from our limited personalities by finding satisfaction in what

Matthew Arnold called "a stream or tendency making for righteousness."

The weakness of Natural Ethics lies in the fact that it hesitates in its attempt to define the bond which unites man to man. That the union is there it frankly, sometimes fervently, admits, but it finds great difficulty in coming to close quarters with its real character. My pursuit of reason will somehow turn out to be my neighbour's pursuit, my consciousness, the uprising of an eternal consciousness. These arguments, it may be said, derive their force from the facts of experience rather than from the cogency with which these facts are woven into a system. Hence it is that the pursuit of well-being can so readily take to itself a "selfish line." There is a charm in Hedonism—the charm of the delightfully simple. It gets rid of the haunting spectre of a Great Other. Yet, when it gets rid of it, it is compelled by the hard facts of life to restore it after some fashion. The difficulty always remains of relating our duty to our self-interest, and at no period is the identification secured with such absoluteness as to command universal acceptance. The right and the good often appear to be in conflict, and hence the repeated observations in literature about the sternness of duty. It is true that the concept of an ultimate perfection seeks to resolve this dualism. But what meaning has ultimate perfection to a perishing being?

It is here that Christian Ethics comes to our assistance. God is not merely an Ideal which may be attained (after a long process) in a rational perfection in which "the Absolute" perfectly knows itself in man. God is a Living Reality, and union with Him is the beginning of the process which ends in individual immortality and a realised perfection of being. God is at once Righteousness in Himself and the Communicator of righteousness to us. And God is also Redeemer. He deals perfectly with the alien force that has destroyed harmony, and restores man to a place of favour and blessing—the place from which he had fallen. And, even in redemption, God expresses the eternal law of His Being, which is the foundation of morality. He satisfies for guilt before He clears the guilty.

It is this element in the Divine revelation that places a check upon the notion that rational perfection is simply an ordered human progress. The disappointment which is evident in the records of the race is now fully explained.

There is no power in ourselves to help ourselves. Training may accomplish a great deal. The influence of Divine revelation passed on from age to age may secure a measure of moral attainment. But the horizon stretches still beyond us. There is no finality in human endeavour after holiness. The prize for ever eludes our grasp. It is humbling to human pride to be told that sinfulness is our portion, and that unaided we cannot deliver ourselves from it. In all ages men have spun fine theories that might enable them to evade this conclusion. But, the more earnest men have been in the direction of real moral reform, the more has the truth of inability forced itself upon their attention. The Christian system proclaims the root evil to be that man's relation to God is wrong. But it does not stop there. It assures the helpless sinner that provision for the restoration of right relations has been made at infinite cost. It restores man to a right position as a condition of restoring him to righteousness. We need to be reconciled to God, and the first movement is made from the side of God. The fear of just judgment is now removed. The Judge becomes an Advocate, pleading with us to receive His proffered mercy.

Dr. Denney says that those who regard the message of redemption in Christ as lacking in moral stimulus take but little account of the instinct of gratitude. They also seem to under-rate the operative power of hope. The soul that has been visited by the power of God in redemption is placed as a reconciled sinner in a place of willing obedience. The strong sense of emancipation from law and wrath is a powerful incentive to walk worthy of the new vocation. Justification by faith releases the soul from the dread engendered by "the bad conscience," and creates a new centre of moral endeavour, relating our actions to the will of Him Who delivered us from bondage.

This is the meaning of the continued affirmation in the New Testament that the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. In itself, the law is holy and just and good. But its very holiness fills the sinner with a sense of defect, and quickens in him the consciousness that he has placed himself outside the code which still makes its imperative felt in his conscience. His obedience to Divine commands is sporadic, and even then incomplete. There is a continued sense of disunion. The law is not met with a cordial

response. It is acquiesced in to a degree, and yet it is always resisted. It is felt as a bondage, and more keenly felt because its unalterable righteousness is a challenge to man's sin. The release of soul which comes through the consciousness that the accusations of law have been met and satisfied not only inspires hope, as we have seen, but creates a new response in the soul. The emancipated sinner now obeys from the heart. His desires are heavenward, and the externality of God's commands gives place to a joyous sense of freedom to serve. The new vision of God becomes a powerful motive towards a new life. God becomes to him a Father Who has reconciled His wayward son, no longer imputing trespasses. He gratefully recognises that he has been brought into intimate fellowship through the gift of the Holy Spirit. A new motive and a powerful one directs his actions. The love of God to him creates a love of God in him. Realising his oneness with the Eternal Source of righteousness, he realises that thus, and thus alone, has he attained to perfect freedom. The law becomes no longer an engine of terror threatening him because of his lamentable failure, it is a transcript of that life which is at once his and God's. He stumbles forward indeed, and his stumbling indicates that as yet he is inspired by hope rather than by the full realisation of the purposes of God. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." But he stumbles forward because he is in heart and mind one with the eternal purpose of His Lord. It is thus that the unresolved antitheses of Natural Ethics find a happy solution. It is thus, and thus only, that service is perfect freedom.

"The moment I make myself and Christ two, I am all wrong. But when I see that we are one, all is rest and peace" (Luther).

CHAPTER XVII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—THE LAW OF LIBERTY

ARCHDEACON HARE well observes: "To Christ, the Incarnate God, our relations are wholly personal. He is not a notional abstraction, not an idea of the mind, enthroned in a logical vacuum. We are bound to Him by all our deepest, strongest, most personal feelings—by our personal consciousness of sin, by our personal need of redemption, by gratitude for personal forgiveness, by love on account of love shown directly, personally to ourselves. Thus, while the God of Natural Religion is an object of mere belief, Christ is an object of faith: and where faith shrinks up into belief, Christ will almost be lost sight of. To mere speculation, when disjoined from a living, personal, practical faith, He is still, as He ever has been, *foolishness*" (*The Victory of Faith*, p. 85). The Christian, therefore, in whom faith has awakened in its full spiritual power, at the very moment in which he experiences freedom from the threatenings of law, is possessed of a true consciousness of the righteousness of the law which he longs to be fulfilled in him. As a free man he becomes the bondslave of Jesus Christ. This paradox is realisable in experience. It has a faint reflection in the way in which a dominating personality often evokes imitation which is sometimes almost ludicrous. The young man seeks to model himself on his hero, and to direct attention to small mannerisms which are then seen divorced from the actual character of the original possessor, and which excite laughter rather than admiration. But there is a true following of a master. The painter, from a fruitful disciple, becomes a true rival of the genius who inspired his efforts. The literary man drinks in the thoughts of the sages, makes them his and reproduces them in a new and original form. The closer the following, the greater the final result. The mistaken notion of freedom, which would place it in complete irresponsibility to all others, reaches its fullest expression in a lunatic asylum. But no imitation of another, nor any appropriation of the spirit of

genius communicated through the existence of a common sympathy, adequately explains the relation of the Christian to his Lord.

The similes of the Vine and the branches, the Head and the members, the House and the various stones, are all surpassed in the prayer of our Lord, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee." The same blessed unity of purpose and will as is exhibited in the Divine Nature is the fullest exhibition of the intimate relation between true believers secured by their definite contact with their Lord. This unity with Christ and the Father is mediated through the Eternal Spirit, Who is the Christian's Guest, Guide and Power. Here again we touch a unique feature in the Christian revelation. Dorner has a very suggestive passage in which he says: "Ethics includes chiefly the rectitude by which man is put in relation, not only with his fellows, but primarily with God, and so arrives at personality. Thus this idea of rectitude, essential to the ethical, and ever immanent in it, preserves the distinction between God and the world; and without it, love itself would not be love. An idea, therefore, of the unity of the Divine and the human, not mediated by the idea of the ethical, can of necessity be only of a physical kind, and superficial, such as we must pronounce that to be which among the Hellenes was consummated in the idea of the beautiful, or of art. . . . Hence, in the whole heathen world the idea of the God-man has never been even remotely approached in the sense in which it always lived in the Church's consciousness" (*History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, Div. I, vol. i, p. 13).

It is only through the deeper union of God and man revealed in the Incarnation that we can fully realise the place occupied in Christian thought by the Holy Spirit. It is His function to unite us to Christ, Who has already entered into union with us by taking our nature. Once this fact is understood, we can better appreciate the attribution of every spiritual gift and grace to the work of the Holy Spirit. The supreme end of the movement of God towards man is the moral end. We are destined to be conformed to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. It is impossible to interpret the message of deliverance from the curse of the law as a licence to break the principle of rectitude. But man's helplessness demands a

supernatural power working in him and with him if the ideal is to be realised. The foundation of Christian Ethics is found in the fact that we can accomplish nothing apart from the Divine initiative. At every stage in moral progress God displays Himself in grace and mercy. At every stage His work is wrought in us by the Living Spirit.

When we endeavour to relate this fact of revelation to the experience of the individual, there are discoverable several stages in the process towards true morality. In the Epistles, much stress is laid upon the call of God. We are told in varying language that the soul is irresponsive to the demands of true righteousness until the voice of God sounds in deaf ears. In our Lord's own teaching, as presented in St. John's Gospel, the moral quickening is regarded as analogous to the call that wakes the physical dead. "They that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." This idea is developed particularly in the Pauline Epistles, but it is not peculiar to them. St. Peter could remind his hearers, "Like as He which called you is holy, so be ye also holy in all manner of living." St. James expresses the same idea, though he falls back on the earlier gospel presentation, where the word "chosen" takes the place occupied by the word "called" in the Epistles generally. "Did not God choose," he writes, "them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to them that love Him?" This call of God is regarded as effectual. It is something different from an invitation conveyed in the gospel message. It is an inner conviction wrought in the heart that the invitation is one to which we ought to respond, and it is a loosening of those bonds which held us back from a true decision.

The basis of this effectual call is found in the relation that subsists between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. This is true of the Old Testament; Job says: "All the while my breath is in me" (or "for my life is yet whole in me"), "and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job xxvii. 3). And again: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job xxxiii. 4). It is significant for our purpose that in both passages Job recognises that this fact of an intimate relation between God and the human soul demands as a consequence uprightness of heart.

Individual men can influence their fellows because they are possessed of a common nature, which is interpreted by a common reason, but the Old and New Testaments carry us further into the mystery of this common bond, and relate it to the direct operation of God, calling men into being. If that be conceded, then it is possible to understand, at least in some measure, this movement of the Spirit awakening the dead conscience and directing the will. There is something similar discoverable in experience in the study of the subconscious. Below the movements of thought which present themselves to our mind, there are hidden impulses which spring into the conscious sphere, sometimes apparently unbidden. It would be a mistake to identify the work of the Spirit with the movements of the subconscious or unconscious mind. That would be to suggest that the possibilities of holiness are latent in the soul, and could spring to being unaided. It would be a subtle form of the old Pelagian idea that man is the creator entirely of his own actions, and can reverse by a single volition the history of his past. There is something fascinating in this theory, and the new element in every action lends it a measure of support, but if it were the fact we should expect exemplifications of it, whereas experience teaches us that the evil in our nature is so deep-seated that it vitiates all moral decisions. This is not to say that there are no strivings after good, and no differences in moral values between one set of actions and another, but that the ideal of true holiness still lies beyond man's highest endeavour, and must lie beyond him if he remains untouched by Him Who is the Source of righteousness. Again, to identify the Divine Spirit with man's subconscious being would be a form of Pantheism, emphasising the agreement and ignoring the difference between the nature of God and man.

At the same time, the human phenomenon, especially when we recognise that the subconscious mind contains in it contributed elements from sources outside the individual, helps us to understand that the Spirit Who made us can find entrance and impress His character and the urgency of His call upon our very nature, which is thereby changed, and is yet still truly our own. James, indeed, is disposed to dispute the analogy which has been suggested. He says: " Psychology and religion are thus in perfect harmony up

to this point, since both admit that there are forces seemingly outside of the conscious individual that bring redemption to his life. Nevertheless psychology, defining these forces as " subconscious," and speaking of their effects as due to " incubation," or " cerebration," implies that they did not transcend the individual's personality; and herein she diverges from Christian theology, which insists that they are direct supernatural operations of the Deity " (*Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 211). Later in his discussion James seeks to bridge this gap, but only by invoking his pragmatist test—*i.e.*, if the results are ethically good we may thankfully accept them, if they are not good let us reject them, however much they may be due to the influence of supernatural power.

But it might be suggested by the Christian theologian that the error in James's presentation is just the error which the Scripture doctrine seeks to eliminate. God and man are thought of as two individuals, operating upon one another, and, as a consequence, only influence can be conceived, whereas the Christian theology demands something more than outside influence. But if God and man be related as Creator to created, and as Grace-giver to grace-receiver, if, in other words, the difference is transcended in a holy unity, then it may be possible to conceive that that which proceeds from the Divine is in its very essence and nature truly human. To put the matter in somewhat less technical language, James ignores the factor of creation. He asks us to believe that the relation between God and man is exhausted by terms which indicate the relation between man and man. He regards the human soul as a closed system into which no entrance can be made even by its Creator. His theology is the theology of the Deist, and has not risen to the sublime heights of the Pauline conception, " In Him we live and move and have our being."

It is true that we stand here on the fringe of human thought, and all our analogies are more or less imperfect, but like Moses, though we cannot enter the promised land, we can view it afar off and " embrace the promise confessing that we are as yet strangers and pilgrims upon the earth."

A further reflection which may narrow the gap between the natural and the supernatural is that God does not

violate the laws of nature which He has created. James makes great play with the fact that saints are very ordinary persons. He analyses Jonathan Edwards's excellent treatise on the affections, and states that he looks in vain for any unique quality in the souls that have been renewed by Divine power. He assures us that untouched individuals are sometimes superior. Is that a modest plea for his own amiability? This line of argument, which is developed in all seriousness by James, and, we may add, with an absence of acerbity, finds popular expression in the common statement, "Worldly people often put Christians to shame." But in defence there are certain considerations that need to be taken into account. James and the popular critic live in countries that have been dominated for centuries by at least an imperfect conception of Christian Ethics. The external operation of God is not without its effect upon the hearts and minds of individuals. If, indeed, James could present us with bodies of individuals wholly untouched by the conceptions that dominate the Christian ethical system, and could show a corresponding development in moral conduct amongst these peoples, equal or superior, both in extent and in content, to the morality exhibited in Christian lands, his argument would have much more cogency. Non-Christian apologists for Natural Ethics divorced from any influence of the Most High frequently kick away the ladder by which they climb. They have embodied moral ideas springing from the Eternal, and have appropriated them while denying their source.

Again, it is not contended that the inner call of the Spirit creates an entirely new Ethics. It simply throws into bold relief man's incapacity for attainment, and opens a door of hope to the despairing. But the Spirit operates on a soul coming from God and still possessing reason and a moral sense. We might expect, therefore, that the effect of supernatural grace would be to emphasise certain moral duties, and secure a measure of compliance with them, such duties being already recognised in the ordinary life of man, and, through the operation of the common grace of the same Spirit, finding an imperfect expression in human conduct.

A third consideration, which unhappily narrows the gap between spiritual attainment and what we may describe as moral aspiration, is that limiting influence of the flesh

which finds such consistent expression, particularly in the pages of the New Testament.

Inevitably in our discussion we have passed from a conception of the inner call to the deeper idea of the regeneration of the soul. The inner call is the first stage in the process, but, as it is to be conceived as effective, the process presents itself as the only adequate explanation of it. When we consider the call of the Spirit it is a mistake to divorce it from the ordinary processes of human thought. It is not a supernatural obsession, and possibly the emphasis that James has laid upon instantaneous conversion has led him rather to suggest this aspect to his readers. Pathological instances of the uprising of sudden impulses are not the best illustrations of a work of God the Holy Spirit. This is not to deny instantaneous conversion. It is simply to guard against the suggestion that the moment of passing from death to life can have no previous history, and must stand wholly unrelated to man's normal procedure. There is a tendency in modern times to rely too largely upon psychological theory, which is peculiarly valuable if it is kept within proper bounds. It is necessary to guard against the idea so frequently urged in Christian circles that the call of the Holy Ghost must be in the nature of a sudden compelling conviction, and that any attempt at education or human moral influences is to be deprecated.

There is yet another aspect of this idea which has wrought considerable harm. People who are naturally excitable have been led to believe that messages from God are in the nature of sudden impulses, " uprisings from the unconscious," and that the test of their Divine character is the vividness with which they impress the mind. The slow, plodding obedience to the demands of duty is relegated to a secondary place. That is the humdrum of experience, and individuals keep looking for thrills as evidence of their contact with God. No doubt vivid impressions may be thus borne in upon the soul by Divine influence, but it is certain that every ordinary duty has the stamp on it of the authority of God.

As a corrective to the notion of sudden unreasoned impulses being the hall-mark of the Spirit's work, we have only to look to the emphasis in the New Testament on the Word of God. Regeneration, or at any rate the Divine begetting, because regeneration has more than one sense

in the New Testament (*cf.* Matt. xix. 28; Titus iii. 5), is attributed to the Word of God by more than one writer. Paul speaks of the Thessalonians as receiving the Word of God, and describes their actions in the following terms: "Ye received the word of God which ye heard of us . . . not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." This passage can be paralleled frequently, but it is sufficient for the purpose of this discussion.

So far from the call of God being divorced from human experience and being a supernatural imposition that creates an idea, the source of which lies buried in obscurity, there are two processes indicated in Scripture. There is an appeal to the ordinary understanding and intelligence which, as we have seen, has its effect to some extent on the ordinary consciousness of man, taking its place with other influences common to human experience. But in addition there is an operation of the Spirit, preparing the heart for the entrance of this Word, turning the mind and thought so that an attitude of receptivity is created, and the Divine character of the message is fully apprehended. The fact that an instrument is employed which belongs to the region of consciousness, and corresponds to ordinary human principles of reflection and apprehension, indicates for us the close link that binds God's methods to the daily life of the individual.

But if we were to stop there, the findings of the Old and New Testaments would take their place alongside, though possibly superior to, the various systems of Natural Ethics, and the problem of contact with God and of the obscuration occasioned by the Fall would remain in their old position. It is the glory of the New Testament message that it brings to us in clearness the further revelation that the Word of God is with power. It is from one aspect an ethical system. It meets the longing of the human soul for a better condition of things. It portrays clear duties, and the possibility of an immortality constituted by moral conformity to righteousness and true holiness. But it adds to these wonderful messages the revelation of a condescending act of the Eternal over and above conscious apprehension, whereby, in order that we may fully understand the things that are freely given to us of God, our nature is attuned to the personal message and our hearts softened so that we

accept perfect grace. The old Puritan divines spoke of regeneration as a physical work. They did not mean by that that there was any change in the operations that govern bodily exercises, they used the word " physical " in relation to its origin from the Greek language, and meant that there was a work upon the nature of man lying beyond consciousness, but finding expression in living faith. Our affections, feeling and will are touched by the Divine illumination so that we not only desire deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, but we receive gladly Christ the Lord Who is at once our Shield and our Enabler. This work is wrought in the soul by the Spirit, and it finds expression in consciousness through a new apprehension of the word of promise, which becomes the Word of God in our experience, a Divine message from Him Who loved us, offering us a full and free salvation.

St. Paul emphatically declares that such an operation, beginning with the call of God, and ending with a conscious act of faith, makes the individual a new creation. But he is careful to point out that it is old things which are become new. The ordinary operations of understanding, feeling and will continue, but they are related to a different ideal, and displayed under a new control, that must inevitably secure, through the continued operation of the same Spirit, that complete conformity to the will of God which man in his natural condition neither wholly understands nor yet perfectly desires.

We reach a definite point in Christian Ethics when we apprehend that there lies at its base a doctrine of Divine renewal. This is not divorced from the ordinary processes of moral development, and is not fully realised in this life. These two circumstances account for the fact that Christians appear as ordinary individuals, and sometimes fall far below the level of their ideals in a manner surprisingly like the psychologists who " explain " them. The important factor is that apart from such divine renewal it is not possible to get the vision of God's purposes or to fulfil God's will. Like all moral experiences this conviction is mediated to the mind of man, normally, through appeals addressed to the understanding directing the impulses in the right channel. But there is added the work of the Holy Spirit reinforcing the ordinary appeal and using particularly His own work of revelation as the instrument by which the change is

effected. Luther said, "My conscience is bound to the Word of God." The Holy Spirit effects that binding.

There is a further consideration which requires careful attention. Not only is a change in purpose, will and affection wrought in our souls by God the Holy Spirit operating usually through His Word; there is also a continual operation of the same Spirit on the renewed heart. This operation can be viewed under two aspects. There is a continual inworking of the Holy Spirit of God. Attention has been called more than once in our study to the formation of character. The daily exercise of duties not only results in successful performance of the task set before the individual, but in the creation of an aptitude and readiness to perform similar tasks. Habit has a moral quality, though sometimes the fact is concealed. But habit is largely a matter of selection. It is true that the mind or soul is not, as Locke suggested, a *tabula rasa*, a sheet of white paper. Characters are traced upon it, and some more dimly than others. But while we must not exaggerate the power of habit, we must recognise it. James, who is particularly emphatic on the physical side of habit, if the expression may be permitted, has some strong words on its potency in moral effort. "There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer, who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but who never does a manly concrete deed. Rousseau, inflaming all the mothers of France, by his eloquence, to follow nature and nurse their babies themselves, while he sends his own children to the foundling hospital, is the classical example of what I mean" (*Textbook of Psychology*, p. 148). Rousseau might indeed plead certain physical disabilities that hindered him from carrying out his own advice, but we know what James meant. Butler had the same idea one hundred years ago: "Going over the theory of virtue in one's thoughts, talking well, and drawing fine pictures of it; this is so far from necessarily or certainly conducing to form a habit of it, in him who thus employs himself, that it may harden the mind in a contrary course, and render it gradually more insensible, *i.e.* form a habit of insensibility, to all moral considerations" (*The Analogy of Religion*, Part I, chapter v).

The importance of active habit being thus established, it remains to emphasise that there is an element of selection

that goes towards the fashioning of it. To quote James again: "Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning, to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the power of judging, in all that class of matter, will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together" (*ibid.*, p. 150). It is the piecemeal contribution in the daily exercise that crystallises our powers in certain directions, quickens our judgment and stimulates our desires, spurring them to action. Even the new life of the soul grows with exercise. The first feeble steps towards truth and righteousness contain the promise of a firm walk of faith.

But in order that our walk may be "close with God" we need, and are promised, the continued enabling of the Holy Spirit working in us that which is well-pleasing unto God. The need of a holy disposition before we can do that which is pleasing in God's sight is one of the deepest feelings possessing the saints of God. And this inner disposition is created by the power of God in regeneration and continually stimulated by the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification. The consciousness of man is affected directly. The darkness of our mind is illuminated by the light of God's Word. The difficulty of securing a right action is often the difficulty of securing right apprehension. Things are seen, but not in their correct proportions. So it is that emphasis is laid on "the renewing of the mind." The spiritual man discerns the things of the Spirit of God. He does so because there is a continual relation maintained between his spirit and the Holy Spirit Himself. In the very deeps of the soul, a region not accessible to ordinary psychological observation, there is a process of conformity either to Divine ideals, or to the reverse, continually going on. This process emerges in conscious desire, and issues in definite action. "Character is an intricate complex of

psychic elements, and, though the most valued of our personal possessions, is only known very partially to us by conscious efforts of introspection. It is mainly discerned by observation of its manifestations in action; and thus we arrive at our knowledge of character largely by inference, mostly from noting the influence it has on conscious life; just as we discover an invisible planet by the perturbations it produces in other bodies. We arrive at the unconscious from its well ascertained effects in consciousness. 'The qualities of modesty, shame, mother love, etc., clearly to be seen in their manifestations, spring from the instincts hidden in the unconscious depths of our being' (Ribot)" (A. T. Schofield, *Springs of Character*, p. 3).

The hidden depths have God-given qualities resident in them, and also instincts that have arisen through the abuse of these qualities. The law of God is written on the heart, but has been overlaid and partially defaced by misapplication of our natural powers. The moral transformation, to which the name regeneration has been applied, "gives new motives and objects rather than new faculties" (Schofield, *ibid.*, p. 215). Our life is now made to centre in God, Who becomes a living Reality, and in Whose service is found our perfect freedom. The Divine Spirit not only supplies new motives and objects after this sort, but continually illumines the understanding, setting objects in their true relation. The uprisings into our conscious life are thus definite and clearly apprehended through His grace, Who makes us to will and to do of His good pleasure. But it often happens in experience that men perceive very clearly the issues of conduct, and are yet betrayed by an inherent disposition to do that which is not convenient and is recognised as, in some respects, undesirable.

It is generally conceded that attention or interest is the dominating consideration that impels the will to action. And the Holy Spirit works in us a strong sense of the immediate presence and power of God, joining the clear perception of the relation of motives and objects to an abiding impression of the will of God. "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord." Were it not for His beneficence in thus working in us a sense of the Divine Presence and the Divine command, even our clear perception would not suffice to bring the true motive into active

play. But there is created an overmastering desire to be lost in the Divine will, to yield ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead. "Not only had the consciousness a better idea of and clearer insight into the oughtness of things, and we had assented to it, but the will was also inclined by correct volition to choose the good; then the work of God had attained its end, had accomplished its purpose, and had changed the whole man" (Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 493).

Let this continual inworking of the Holy Spirit be correctly recognised and there follows inevitably from it a continual outworking in heart and life manifest to all men. The boundary between psychological experience and ethical manifestation is crossed. There are three features that combine in this inner working and outward expression. Chief amongst these is the Word of God. The message of revelation enters the soul and through the operation of God's Holy Spirit creates new desires. It also inspires the individual to appropriate action. The renewed soul obeys from the heart the mould of doctrine into which he has been delivered. It is idle to expect sanctification in heart and life if the appropriate means thereto are neglected. An absence of Scriptural knowledge must inevitably result in a weakening of spiritual apprehension. A return to serious Bible study is one of the urgent needs of our time. There is a close connection between the entrance of God's Word into the heart giving light, and the issue of God's Word in the life producing conformity to Christ. The two can be separated in thought, and ought to be when we are considering the processes of the Spirit. But they are not separated in fact. The internal working of the Holy Spirit implanting true dispositions is the prelude to the outward manifestations in holiness and pureness of living.

There are further operations of God mediated to us through experience. The impressions which are made upon us by the incidents of life have their own place in God's purposes of grace. "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept Thy word." There is here, as in the case of the Word of God, a reciprocal influence. The same circumstances will produce different results according to the differing states of soul in the individuals who experience them. Yet the Christian can truly say, "With mercy and with judgment my web of time He wove." The

ascetic spirit carried to an extreme misses this discipline of God. The isolated life is an incomplete life. We may, and ought to, admire the revolt from a sinful world that prompted men to pass their lives in the desert. But at least some of the strange imaginings and the bitter conflicts with demons were assuredly due to the starved imaginations of the hermit. His world was peopled by angels and devils, intensely real to him, but serving to point the moral to others that repression of natural instincts takes its savage revenge on the tortured soul. "Vainly the corn of wheat would drink the water of the rain of heaven, if it had not also power to take in particles of matter from the earth around it. So too the spiritual life must feed on the things of the world around it, and be nourished by the relations of natural life and of ordered society, without which no human health can long endure. The Ascetic is like the Positivist—he pours out the wine of life, and adores the empty cup; the Pantheist strips his deity of all the relations of reality and worships, not indeed an idol, but a meaningless word which he takes for the Name that is above every name" (Gwatkin, *The Knowledge of God*, vol. i, p. 81).

We must not, then, divorce the Holy Spirit from His Own creation even though that creation has been marred by sin. There is a purpose in the incidents of life, and it is the privilege of the Christian to trace the hand of God in the conditions of his daily experiences. That he cannot trace it perfectly is no reason why he should refuse to trace it at all. Nor should our ethical reaction be confined in thought to the painful incidents. Much space is given in the New Testament to the fact that God chastens His children. But we may reasonably argue that thought is expended on this aspect because it is the more perplexing experience. Other phases of our ordinary experience also find mention. The reality of God's willingness to bestow good gifts is assured to us from the paternal instinct that considers the welfare of children. The union of Christ and His Church finds a parallel in the unity of a happy married state. The kindly relations in human intercourse find natural expression. "Luke, the beloved physician," "Timothy, my son in the faith." Even the harsher features of the social order of early Christianity are irradiated by this glow of human tenderness. "No longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a brother beloved." The soul that seeks

nutriment for the spiritual life only in stated ceremonies and religious rhapsodies has a narrow, cramped existence. The Divine Spirit works in and through every phase of our varied circumstances, and makes the vicissitudes of life ministers of His will.

Yet one other method of the Holy Spirit's working demands notice. (Kuyper refers to these three, though he must not be held responsible for the form of presentation given above.) The third is what he calls " the effect of habit." " The saint co-operates in his own salvation by allowing the holy disposition to radiate in good works. The frequent act of doing good creates the habit. The habit gradually becomes a second nature. And it is this mighty influence of habit which God uses to teach us holiness. In this way God can make one saint instrumental in the sanctification of another " (*ibid.*, p. 489). It would seem better on the whole to regard this effect of habit not as a third instrumental process but as a condition which renders effective the distinguishing characteristics to which attention has been directed. The work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, mediated through the apprehension of the Word of God, creates strong convictions and right impulses. But a subsidiary influence strengthening the Word of God is this " groove in the mind " that results from putting convictions and impulses into operation.

Similarly, God's providential dealings, recognised as coming from Him, set the individual upon a definite course of action. To relate the experience of life to the will of God becomes so natural as to be almost unconscious. Prayer becomes the breath of the soul, and is as regular in exercise as breathing by the lungs. In both parts of the Divine process the influence of habit is called in to reinforce the work of God in the soul. This is what is to be expected. There is a lesson to be learned from this aspect of Divine truth. The whole business of self-discipline derives its value from this unalterable law that accompanies action. If the full worth of those means which God employs is to be realised in the life of the Christian, then regularity in their use and activity in their employment must be recognised as conditions. The warnings of James and Butler in this matter cannot be disregarded. To this characteristic must be attached the Bible injunctions concerning patient continuance in well-doing, enduring to

the end, pressing toward the mark, to select a few of the widespread exhortations to continuity and perseverance. There is an ethical value in regularity which is often missed.

By means of the Word of God and the ordinary experiences of everyday life, the Spirit of God continually works in the heart of the believer. His working is not contrary to the laws that govern moral development. At the same time there is, in connection with His gracious operations, a power of entrance into the secret recesses of the soul which is not possessed by any individual who may exercise influence upon another. This power is connected with His creative authority, and leads directly to the recognition of a unity in the human race that binds individuals together in the possession of a common reason, a common moral instinct, and a common derivation from the Source of all life. It is this capacity for entrance below consciousness that forms a distinctive feature of the Christian revelation, and it cannot be ignored in any system of Ethics that relates itself directly to the Christian position. The vast stores of the unconscious, some of them, perhaps most of them, contributed by previous acts of consciousness, are open to the influences of the Divine grace. Not only is habit a matter of selection, but the selection can be directed through the awakening of latent possibilities which would never come to fruition were it not for the energising of the Holy Spirit.

Even Christian writers on Ethics sometimes fail to see the supreme importance of the work of the Spirit of God. There is a tendency in some quarters to limit God by the conditions that govern individual relations. Under a false conception of human freedom the individual is regarded as a closed system, entrance to the source of volition can be found only by an act of will, responding to an appeal that presents itself as an external command or entreaty. This limited view excludes the supernatural. It is not to be concealed that there are tremendous difficulties in holding to the Christian presentation outlined above. But these difficulties are seen to be almost entirely due to our very limited knowledge. They do not disappear when the operation of the Spirit of God below consciousness, changing the inner dispositions of the soul, is denied. They emerge again in all their force when the questions of heredity and external environment as formative influences are seriously

considered. The individual who imagines that his reactions to a given set of circumstances would be the same if his parentage, nationality, and climatic environment were wholly different has not even touched the fringe of the problems that surround the problem of individual human freedom. When we are so restricted in our investigations by our imperfect conception of the relation of the individual to the race, it is an act of supreme folly to deny the operations of grace, while we are compelled to acknowledge such natural forces as have been indicated.

The will is the expression of the personality, the personality is the expression of a formed character. The character is the crystallisation of repeated acts of will combined with innate tendencies and dispositions, that have their roots in the far past history of the race. There is a truth in the evolutionary system of Ethics. That truth may be expressed in a sentence. Every act of will has in it the history of the past as well as a fresh determination which looks towards the future. The full discussion of questions of necessity and freedom belongs to the region of pure philosophy, but the facts to which reference has been made illustrate the way that these questions impinge on moral determinations.

Accepting, therefore, the position that there is a will which finds expression in individual consciousness, but is itself a common possession of the race, it is a matter of thankfulness that the ordinary bias is capable of correction through Him Who is the true Universal, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and Who mediates His work in our souls through the Eternal Spirit. The position that the Old and New Testaments adopt is that God alone is good, His will alone is the good will, and therefore the burden of all spiritual achievement should be to know the will of God. Our Lord's law of love is the practical standard for the Christian. If this law is to be realised in the experience of the Christian, it is of supreme importance to recognise that the Spirit of God draws us by His mighty power to an appreciation that God alone is good. Conscience aims at the best, but conscience can work only on the materials with which it is supplied, and this explains the varieties of consciences. If reason itself has been obscured, the shadow that has been cast upon it hinders it from mirroring perfectly the God Whom it was created to reflect. Not only are but parts of His own way known, but these parts are known

inadequately. The highest achievement of unaided man cannot, therefore, restore the true image of righteousness and holiness. Indeed, it is possible to go further and suggest that the restoration even under the working of the Spirit must be slow, because the essential character of man must be preserved. It is here that the operation of the Spirit relates itself to human necessity. The figure of this is given to Moses when God says: "No man can see my face and live." Ere the truth that could be apprehended was revealed, God covered him with His hand until He had passed by. The recovery of the soul is always presented as a matter of great difficulty. The brightness of a pure light might blind freshly opened eyes, and therefore it is shaded to meet the imperfection of their vision. But the insistence of the New Testament particularly is on the fact that however gradual the revelation of God may be, it is always a revelation, not simply a natural development of the human powers. God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and hath shined in our hearts.

It is impossible, therefore, to develop Christian ideals apart from Divine revelation. A practical illustration of this theoretical position is found in the present condition of the world. Christian morals have permeated to some extent the more enlightened heathen lands, but there is no instance of an independent moral development which attains even to the inferior position occupied by Christian countries. Nor can we say that, where the influence of heathenism is still dominant, Christian Ethics has reached that point of development which it manifests where the gospel is freely proclaimed. It is the function of the Spirit to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto us. There can be no separation between the life of Christ and the life of His follower in this regard. Apart from the new impulse given to the moral consciousness by the example and teaching of the Saviour of men, there can be no such thing as Christian Ethics. No doubt this position in its naked statement sounds like a truism, but it is necessary to make it because of the suggestion freely uttered in many quarters that Jesus Christ was the completion in a natural order of Hebrew Christian thought, and that He must take His place beside the great leaders of the world as making a contribution to moral ideals which is authoritative, but certainly not unique.

The presentation of Christ as an external Guide is the denial of that very principle of internal communication of supernatural power which forms the nerve of Christian thought. It is not merely that Christ spake as never man spake; it is not merely that His death has a representative character which vitally affects our standing before God; it is not merely that His resurrection is the seal of a Divine approval and gives a new meaning and significance to His life and death; it is something further than all this: that through the work of God the Holy Spirit, the Christ Who thus lived and died and rose again becomes the possession of every true believer, and lives His life in them and through them. The Holy Spirit works in us and through us to bring us and the Church into conformity with the perfect will of God. He implants in our hearts a sense of God's love towards us, and awakens love toward God as a natural consequence. He creates by this dominant principle a new character which desires above all things to be one with the God Who has thus revealed Himself. But He does this by uniting us so closely to Christ that He dwells in our hearts by faith. Being in possession of the Lord of Glory, we are placed in possession of the Divine power operative in the incarnation, death and atonement, and, possibly in fulness, in the resurrection. Through this mighty power of God we die to sin, and are raised again to righteousness. There is an imperative necessity that we should fulfil His will. Wherever the purpose of this new force is checked by indwelling corruption, there is disquietude of spirit, the sense of an alien element warring against our true desires, and there is bred in us a longing for deliverance which drives us back again on the enabling power of God, as revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. But this new power thus communicated must not be conceived as an external impelling force. The problem of much of our ethical teaching lies here. Great ideals float before the mind, but they remain ideals. Man sometimes recognises that he ought to do certain things, and at the same time rebels against the inner demand. He is not united in his mind with a particular moral concept. He rebels because it is presented to him as a command from a superior Being, rather than as an inner desire springing from the depths of his own soul.

Naturalistic Ethics has felt this difficulty, and the attempt to solve it may be studied with profit. Aristotle and

Spinoza, for example, laid great emphasis on the value of the contemplative life, and even the Epicureans emphasised the value of freedom from the urge of disturbing passion. The Christian Ethics tells us that Christ dwells in the heart, and that the Holy Spirit helps our infirmities. But the dwelling of Christ in the heart is not presented as a simple residence of what, with some degree of harshness, we might describe as a foreign moral principle, issuing its commands in opposition to our feebler apprehension. On the contrary, the indwelling of Christ is a pervasive power which, while it remains distinct as a moral impulse coming from the Source of all light and truth, yet identifies itself with our feelings after God, so that we more and more conform to the image of the Son. The Spirit of Christ in us does not reside simply side by side with our spirit, but in a close union with it. This union may be, and is, hindered from attaining full perfection by the lingering corruption that still attaches to our human spirit. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, but it is a true union that becomes more and more intimate as the witness to our spirit is the more sought and acted upon. So that in addition to the Divine operation, there is an inevitable human response. The message of Christ brought home to the heart by the Holy Spirit creates at once repentance towards God. The changed relation of the sinner results in that union with Christ which is the condition of the indwelling of the Lord in the heart. Faith manifests itself at the beginning as an acceptance of God's judgment upon our sinful condition, and therefore lies at the root of true repentance, and faith proceeds to gather strength by the recognition that in Christ Jesus we are truly reconciled to God. Through the atoning sacrifice wrought for us, our sins are no longer imputed to us. Grace is truly bestowed upon us in the Beloved.

This enabling presence of Christ, with its intimate union with our human spirit, produces true faith, a continual desire for conformity to the Divine will. Martin Luther gave utterance to the conception that a perfect faith would issue in a perfect holiness because to trust God completely would be to fulfil His will. It is the office of the Spirit to reveal to our consciousness the character of Christ. It is the office of Christ dwelling in the heart to unite Himself so closely to our personality that our will finds its true

reinforcement in His will. The language of the New Testament is surprisingly strong in relation to this inner experience of the Christian life. St. Peter does not hesitate to say that he is a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed, and to trace in the development of the Christian life an intimate parallel between the life of their Lord, both in suffering and glory, and their own experiences as they followed His example. And so it is possible to understand St. Paul's assurance that God worketh in us both to will and do of His good pleasure. There is a constant communication of the Spirit and power of Christ to the individual soul in whom He dwells. As a result, the uprisings of conscience, while they are truly our own, are controlled and directed by His Spirit. The process of selection, to which reference has already been made, throws into relief those affinities of the renewed human spirit with the purpose and will of God, which issue in surrender and a true conformity to that will. So we are assured that if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. We look into the perfect law of liberty and continue therein. So we are reminded in the lengthy discussion in Romans vi, vii and viii that our union with our Lord is not yet completely perfected. There is no more effective check on true spiritual progress than an easy acceptance of a doctrine of perfectionism.

It is necessary to bear in mind continually that the new man, created after Jesus Christ in righteousness and true holiness, has his conflicts with the old man and his deeds. As Kuyper puts it: "All evil ties are not dissolved at once, and all holy ties are not united at once. By the mystic union with Christ the child of God actually possesses the entire new man, even though he should die tomorrow; but he has not yet the enjoyment of it. Being wedded to the new man before God, he is, by a painful process, yet to die to the old man, and by Divine grace the new man is to be raised in him. And this is his sanctification: the dying of the old and the rising of the new, by which God increases and we decrease" (*The Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 479).

It sometimes seems as if there is a contradiction in the ethical teaching of the New Testament. We are exhorted to watch, to pray, to fight, and on the other hand to yield, to trust, to rest. But the contradiction is more apparent than real. The more the Christian recognises his depend-

ence upon the animating power of the Holy Spirit, the more he will seek by faith to realise that dependence, and the more he realises it the stronger will be his resistance to other suggestions coming from his evil nature or the world around. He knows that he has no power of himself to help himself, and therefore he calls upon the Lord. But he knows also that in the power of Christ he can mortify his members which are upon the earth. Therefore he yields himself to those convictions of the duty of obedience to the higher law which are wrought in his soul, and emerge in his consciousness as he more and more submits himself to Divine guidance. From one aspect, his consciousness of the all-controlling power of Christ and the Holy Spirit presents his action as one of submission and true surrender. From another aspect, his very submission compels him to offer stout resistance to those spiritual forces which are inimical to the mind and will of God. Furthermore, attention must again be directed to the fact that the residence of Christ in the soul is not simply to be conceived as an admission of a Holy Guest. The Lord not only issues His commands, but secures by His gracious power a willing co-operation of him to whom the command is issued. A partnership between Christ and the soul, if it is to be moral, demands a glad acceptance of the Lord's sovereign control. Just because it is the acceptance of the Lord, it demands further a recognition of the duty of absolute obedience. When the soul is most truly conscious of its own helplessness, it is most earnest in reliance on Divine power to destroy the enemies to its peace. But Divine power, because it has for its objective the renewal of the man, can only slay the enemy through the man's own activity. Resistance to evil must be the conscious determination of the individual, and all the normal powers of reason, reflection, understanding and emotion must be called into play if the personality is to determine aright by virtue of its own moral decision. Hence, while the believer recognises his entire helplessness apart from Christ, he exercises at the same time all the qualities of his soul, according to the principles of their normal working.

A Collect of the Church of England expresses this very aptly where it says: "We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may

bring the same to good effect." The desires emerge in the mind, and they are carried into operation by the will, but neither in the one case nor in the other is the human activity divorced from the enabling of the Spirit of God. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." So that it is possible for us to understand that a life of entire submission is a life of warfare, and a consciousness of helplessness the very first condition of complete victory.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

IF THE WILL OF GOD is accepted as the supreme guide of life, it is obvious that our dominating concern will be His glory. In very many instances the course which is in conformity to His will presents itself immediately to consciousness. The conflict is simply that which is experienced in practically every ethical system between the higher ideal of universal obedience and the lower standard of personal interest or immediate gratification. But there are cases in which the choice seems to lie between two conflicting rights, or between the lesser of two evils. This is the region to which reference has been made in an earlier portion of this work, where the system of casuistry was briefly discussed.

A few examples may suffice to present this problem clearly. A man's duty to his family may stand out in sharp contrast to his duty to his country. He is called upon to decide as to which interest shall determine his action, and he may find himself in very great difficulty in coming to a true decision. In such cases, in addition to the urgency of the question itself, there are the influences arising from popular sentiment, the danger that his motives may be misunderstood, in fact a thousand and one external conditions that in certain circumstances may becloud the issue. Again, a Christian may have to determine his responsibility to the State. This takes a twofold form. Should he exercise his right of voting or leave it to the determination of others as to what individual shall be elected? Suppose, for example, that an unworthy candidate obtained his seat by a majority of one, and that the Christian knew that his abstention and his influence on another to abstain proved the actual determining point in the returns. Could he acquit himself of responsibility for a result which he did not desire, and which he believed might issue in some loss to the community? Many similar instances of conflict will occur to the reader. Again, and this is the second form,

in our imperfect world it frequently happens that a man is forced to determine which is the lesser evil of two courses of action, neither of which in his judgment can be ranked as good. A man on an elective board may be placed in the position in which no candidate meets in his judgment the requirements necessary for an effective discharge of the office to which election is sought. Yet to abstain from voting for a candidate confessedly inferior might result in the election of a still less qualified individual.

Questions of this sort are greatly multiplied through the increasing interrelations in Society. The monetary system of a country, for example, frequently involves the individual in indirect relation to methods of gain which he would directly eschew and repudiate. What is he to do?

As a rule it will be found that too much is made of these conflicts, which are often the result of loose thinking and a failure to appreciate God's sovereign rights, as represented in the family or the State, and to place these in their proper order of priority as indicated in the Scriptures. Careful study of the New Testament reveals the fact that both our Lord and His Apostles accepted the existing order as something that came from God, and did not attempt to overthrow it by the imposition of a ready-framed code of new rules. Our Lord drew attention to the fact that new wine must be put into new bottles, and it is certainly not a straining of the simile to suggest that He thereby indicated that environment changes slowly but surely in accordance with a developing moral consciousness. This aspect of moral conduct is usually ignored by the enthusiastic reformer. He is impatient of any check upon his proceedings, and will insist on introducing a new heaven and a new earth by the process of destroying those conditions that exist at present. In an interesting story, *No. 5, John Street,* the sapient observation is made that a certain anarchist believed that he would improve society by consistently blowing it to pieces. There is something of this temper in the unbalanced attitude of some would-be reformers. They are impatient of the slightest check on their doctrinaire principles.

But the New Testament bears with inequalities such for example as slavery and war, declining to put the Christians in an attitude of overt hostility to conditions that govern the social life of the people, and trusting rather to the new

spiritual force to overthrow in time these enemies to true spiritual progress. An enlightened study of the New Testament in this direction will prove of immense assistance to the harassed but scrupulous individual, who is burdened by these acute problems. This is not to say that an immediate solution will at once present itself. But comfort may be found in the fact that the Spirit Who has lifted the soul to higher spiritual conceptions is also operative in the world outside. The New Testament, indeed, assures us that the world lies in the Evil One, and we need to keep this fact continually present in our minds. But it also tells us that Christ came to save the world, and so we may recognise with thankfulness that there is a movement of the Kingdom of God in all those efforts after a higher moral condition that find expression, however imperfectly, in legislation and the ordinary commerce of man with man. We need to remind ourselves of the patience of God, and to cultivate the same habit of patience in dealing with our fellow-men.

The individual is responsible for his own reactions, and cannot acquit himself of blameworthiness if he does that which his conscience condemns. He is also entrusted with the sacred responsibility of revealing to others the new and better way of submission to the Divine will. Every Christian is therefore a reformer. His influence makes for progress towards the Divine ideal. And when the Christian is beset with difficulties; when the ordered life round about him refuses to yield to his attempts at better conditions; when he is confronted with a possible conflict in which his individuality would be at once submerged, and no useful purpose achieved in its submergence—then he can recall for his guidance the fact that it was not otherwise with the early pioneers of the Faith, it was even not otherwise with the Master Himself. He can fall back upon the truly sublime conception that so long as he is individually faithful to the best that he can accomplish, the final issue can be left safely in the hands of God.

St. Paul was confronted with a real difficulty of this sort when he had to exhort the early Christians to a recognition of the authority of Nero. It is now seen in the light of developing history that his submission to the ordinance of God, Who placed, in His providence, an unworthy ruler over the Roman Empire, achieved more for the emancipation of

humanity than any reckless incitement to immediate revolt, which would have entailed bloodshed without securing any true reform. The Christian principle would have perished, and the last state of Rome would have been worse than the first.

These are not easy questions, and the method of casuistry is of all methods the very worst that could be adopted towards their solution. But, though they are not easy, the Christian who is confronted with them has a source of information and guidance in the revelation of God, and a calm confidence in the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of Christ, that keeps him patiently continuing in well-doing.

It is at times of real conflict that the importance of the inner guidance of the Spirit of God, not in the nature of uncontrolled impulses, but in the form of a clear perception of duty, modelled upon the teaching of His Word, becomes most evident. The man who dreams that he can suitably comport himself towards God in the midst of a sinful generation, without continual prayer, is deceiving himself. In the Old Testament the clear eye of the prophet recognised the danger that beset the children of Israel in the land of their exile. Many of them were falling victims to the prevalent idolatry, and it seemed to some as if the best method of prevention would be to encourage a spirit of revolt against the rulers of Babylon. Jeremiah, recognising that the mills of God ground slowly, exhorted them on the contrary to pray for the peace of the city wherein they dwelt. No more serious question can arise in the mind of a true servant of Christ than that which is concerned with the limits of his responsibilities considered closely in relation to his environment. It is here that he can fall back upon the Divine promise, "I will guide thee with Mine eye."

The guiding principles of Holy Scripture are usually found sufficient as indicating the general lines on which our judgment in these vexed matters should proceed, and we must be careful not to restrict the liberty of others in cases where only general lines are laid down for our guidance. The promise of the Holy Spirit, Who helps our prayer to God, enables us to make those particular determinations which the circumstances demand. The God Who is kind to the unthankful and the evil, and yet in His kindness is untouched by their wickedness, directs His

children as to the manner in which they are to relate their conduct to the unthankful and the evil amongst whom their lot is cast. "I wrote unto you," says St. Paul, "not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters: for then must ye needs go out of the world." Here, as the context shows, the region of rebuke is determined by the condition of the person rebuked—there is one attitude to the Christian, and another to him who is outside. This does not imply two varying codes of morality, but just that recognition of existing conditions which induces a sane judgment in matters of moral moment.

It needs to be remembered, however, that the Holy Spirit never leads us against the plain teaching of Holy Scripture. That would be to deny His authority for the writings which were produced under His guidance. A plain commandment of the Word of God, taken in its proper relation and circumstances, is at once determinant for Christian conduct. Furthermore, there does not seem to be justification for accepting revelations, so-called, that have as their object the superseding of the plain Scriptural record. Neither in the content of Christian dogmatics, nor yet in the region of Christian conduct, are we encouraged to look for special manifestations that may modify or even contradict the clear messages contained in God's Holy Word.

One further caution seems to be necessary. There can be no division or degree in right conduct. The decision which the individual is called upon to make is according to the standard of holiness laid down by God Himself. It is quite true, as has been indicated, that relations between man and man in an imperfect world create difficulties at times as to the nature of this decision. But it must be insisted that even if the individual judges mistakenly, his judgment must be that which belongs to the will of God as conceived by him in relation to the existing circumstances which concern him. No countenance is given in Scripture to the idea of two moral standards, one of which operates in the region of compulsory obligation, and the other in a higher stage under the title of "counsels of perfection." Roman Catholic divines have invented this distinction, and give as an illustration of it the rich young ruler, who asserted that he had kept the entire law of God, and to whom

our Lord said: " If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." It is argued that the rich young ruler had fulfilled his obligations, but he could have attained to a higher perfection by adding to that which was demanded of him a voluntary poverty, which he was under no obligation to endure. It may be safely said that this is the destruction of all high moral enterprise. It has resulted in dividing the world into two classes, the " religious " and the " faithful," and is a fruitful source of that laxity in moral conduct which is only too painfully evident in many professing Christians.

The same suggestion of a double standard is found in the popular observations, " You would not expect that from a clergyman," or, " Of course, I make no particular profession," as though in some manner the failure to recognise a sacred obligation relieved the individual from any further duty in relation to it. It is perfectly true that the same moral attitude in relation to material circumstances is not demanded of all men. There are two factors that have to be taken into account: the actual condition in which the individual finds himself, and the actual effect which this condition exercises upon his spirit. The rich young ruler could not part with his riches, and was unable to use them for the glory of God, hence the test which the Lord put upon him, and which proved at the moment too strong for his moral fibre. He yielded to a lower impulse, and missed the glory of perfect freedom. That does not mean that all rich men are required to make the same sacrifice, but it meant that in the case of the rich young ruler the sacrifice was essential to spiritual health. " If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee."

" Counsels of perfection " create two grave moral obstacles to holiness. The introduction of them lowers the moral code below that which is best, and tends therefore to introduce excuses for the imperfect performance of recognised duties. Further, and perhaps this is even more dangerous, the suggestion is offered to the mind that not only can the law of God be fulfilled perfectly by an as yet not fully redeemed personality, but actually this law can be transcended, and an accumulation of merit accrued to the individual. It is, indeed, contended by the advocates of the system, that such accumulation of merit is not conceived apart from the grace of Christ, but this does not assist the

inquirer very much. Grace has subtly changed its meaning, and, instead of being presented as an unmerited form of Divine power, appears rather in the guise of an aid, with the underlying thought that some slight merit attaches to the individual for appropriating this enabling gift. Human co-operation is raised beyond the place that it occupies in the process of sanctification, and the Divine power is consequently lowered. A religion of works is always beset with this haunting spectre of human meritoriousness. A religion of grace establishes man's helplessness, so that he recognises that the very impulse to holiness in its purity is a derived impulse, and the very enabling which works through him is also something that, while it captures his affection, feeling and will, does so through the plenitude of mercy. The truest saint is the humblest. Ever upon his lips and in his thoughts are the words of the Apostle: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?"

A further evil has been introduced by the conception in some quarters that there are conscious acts which are morally indifferent. It is, of course, recognised in all ethical systems that the wholly unconscious cannot have a moral quality attaching to it: we do not blame a man because he happens to have a weak heart, but in relation to the unconscious we have to bear in mind that the residuum of character is not exactly of the same nature as physical motions which are independent of the will. Character has been created largely by previous conscious acts, and even that further bias which belongs to heredity finds its expression in a formative act of will. When character determines an action, that action emerges into consciousness already possessed of a moral form by virtue of its relation to the human will, exemplified in the history of the individual and the race. But the particular theory under review is that which would attach to certain defined voluntary acts a character of moral indifference. "It is immaterial whether we turn to the right or the left," says an advocate of this opinion, "surely a man's choice of the road he would take when out on a walk for pleasure can have no essential moral character." This is to fall into the error of isolating a particular determination from the whole stream of conscious life, and setting it up in that character of isolation. It may be a matter of complete indifference whether I turn to the right or the left, and yet my desire depends

upon certain considerations which have a moral value. I am justified in taking a walk for pleasure. I am justified in choosing my road. I am justified in allowing the slightest caprice to determine that choice, because, with the immediate object which I have in view, a turn to the right or to the left equally serves my purpose. But, when this is said, the act is not morally indifferent, it stands in relation to a general law of liberty, which, in the circumstances of my doing it, becomes lawful for me to exercise. In other circumstances the walk itself may be wholly immoral, and the caprice which determined my turning to the right or to the left shares in the moral condemnation of my action because in the circumstances such a caprice should have been sternly subordinated to a particular call of duty. An extreme case has purposely been chosen in order to show how moral implicates are discoverable in the simplest action, but the theory under review extended the range far beyond such trivial circumstances, and has sought to create a whole area in which it is contended it does not matter what is done. The doctrine of indifferent acts is closely allied to the theory of mortal and venial sin, and belongs to that range of Ethics which fastens upon certain elements in our nature, and invests them with significance, leaving others largely outside the scope of moral determinations. It is better to abide by the Apostolic injunction: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

The statement is frequently made in modern text-books on Ethics that "there are some situations in which there are no right courses of action." Such statements must be received with very great caution. As has been suggested above, if we isolate a particular action from its whole surroundings, it frequently appears that different choices are a matter of ethical indifference. But this is due in a very large measure to human ignorance. We have at best but a partial idea of the moral scheme of the universe, and we are elevating our partial knowledge into a determination that governs the whole of action. The fact that in a certain circumstance a man can perceive no moral significance in act "A" rather than in act "B" may arise from one of two considerations. He may be unable from his limited knowledge to penetrate to the inner reality of the act. That which appears to him indifferent may carry tre-

mendous moral implicates at its heart. Or the action in itself may be indifferent—*e.g.*, whether I shall eat this kind of dish or that, both, as far as can be seen, equally pleasant and equally wholesome. In the latter case, as indicated above, the moral nature resides in the assertion of the right of choice and in the conviction that either alternative, so far as my knowledge carries me, is within the range of proper moral decision. That is to say, although the act is indifferent, it is indifferent because it relates to a law of my being which I can justly satisfy, and in which I have liberty to allow my individual predilection to determine the nature of the satisfaction. There is an implied assumption that I have fulfilled all that is required of me as a moral being, and have liberty to indulge myself according to my personal fancy, which is not always the case. But the consciousness of limited knowledge demands that all such matters should ultimately be referred to the will of God.

It is contrary to the foundation principles of Ethics to assume that the man who wishes to do right is brought into a situation where no right course is open to him. It is perfectly true that there are periods of crisis where the unaided judgment may grievously err, hence the importance of recognising that there should be a direct approach to God in prayer, that the needed wisdom might be given. It is not the same thing to say that two courses of action may be equally sound ethically, and to say that there are no right courses of action, and yet this confusion is constantly displayed in text-books. There is a reluctance to acknowledge that our very finiteness involves a measure of dependence and that we are bound by reason of it to seek the direct aid of the Holy Spirit. Yet this is a commonplace of New Testament teaching.

A difficult problem does arise in connection with theories of what may be called relative right. This is a problem that in its ultimate issue relates to the harmony of attributes in the Deity. Is love consistent with justice? Can the wicked go unpunished? It is one of the misfortunes of our day that questions of this kind are frequently discussed from a sentimental rather than a rational aspect. Questions of the same character inevitably emerge in human conduct in an imperfect world. That which is right in relation to a properly constituted individual may be wrong if the individual adopts an erroneous attitude in moral conduct.

It may be normally right to give to the necessitous, but if the necessitous spends the needed money, not on his necessities, but on drink, it becomes a problem as to whether giving is not an injury rather than an exercise of benevolence. It is right to be tolerant, but there are occasions where tolerance, owing to the moral perversity of an individual, opens the door for tyranny and persecution. It is right to seek peace, but there are occasions when a passive attitude might result in massacre and consequent moral degradation. In all such instances the guiding principle seems to be that morality must be governed by the universe of action; it is a relation between individuals in a series of independent acts, and as the relations change the determinations of moral conduct must change with them. This is not to say that there is no progress, or that what is right today may become wrong tomorrow. It is rather to assert what the Scriptures so emphatically insist upon, that the base of moral conduct lies in a renewed soul, and that, behind determining acts in relation to existing circumstances, there must be built up a moral constitution in the individual that will create a suitable environment for the exercise of the full principles of righteousness.

Sometimes the failure to appreciate this particular position has led to hasty reforms that have recoiled upon the reformers. Legislation has moved in advance of the moral consciousness of a people, and even real benefits have not been retained because of the inherent perversity that appears as a dominant principle in the community. It would be impossible to offer a solution to such vexed problems. It would imply that the whole system was present in consciousness, and that every moral relation was appreciated at its full worth. God alone occupies that position. His followers can only humbly seek His guidance and determine acute moral questions in dependence on Him and in the light that comes to them from the teaching of His Word. But a healthy sense of our limitations checks that propensity to haste which has dug the grave of many a noble purpose. It is a mistake, however, to say that because determinations are difficult " there are no right courses." What we ought to say is that the complexities of moral interaction frequently make a right course exceedingly difficult to discover. This fact should force each earnest student to pray, " Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

It is part of the work of the Spirit of God to produce in us the obedience of faith. This involves the consecration of the whole personality to God, and a growing proximity to the stand of the full-grown man in Christ. The true Christian position is not static—it is progressive. The nearer a man comes to God, the more sensitive he becomes even about matters which others may lightly tolerate. Here is reached the point where an individual attitude reacts upon the general moral consciousness. The true Christian is at once separate from the world and an influencing force directing the world to higher things. Often this happy position is rendered almost ineffective through the admixture of censoriousness. The Christian, instead of being primarily concerned with his own personal relation to his Master, becomes unduly dogmatic, and forces those rules of conduct which he finds suitable for his spiritual growth upon others who are ill-prepared and incapable of the moral response which he demands. When St. Paul discovered this element manifesting itself in a case where the moral development was not particularly high, but where it took on certain forms of abstention that were elevated into universal rules, he wrote: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." It is perhaps worth noticing that the term used is a servant in a household, one who is in intimate relation to the head of the house, a position of greater dignity and familiarity than that of the ordinary bondslave. It is well, therefore, to remember that there is a range of moral judgment in which the individual is directly responsible to God, and in which it is conceivable that he may be entrusted with a particular set of duties in the household, concerning which he can only render direct account unto His Lord. An extension of this idea would do much to remove misunderstandings, and help to induce a spirit of wide tolerance without any abandonment of that sacred sense of duty which is the nerve of all moral endeavour.

SECTION D. THE MORAL (CHRISTIAN) LIFE

CHAPTER XIX

CHRISTIAN DUTY AND CHRISTIAN VIRTUE

In discussing the relation of the individual to his various responsibilities there is a great temptation that the Christian may slip into the trap of looking to the Church, or to a particular community with which he is associated, often a small section of the Church or of the Christian public, for a detailed list of special duties and necessary abstentions. This tendency explains the common fact that some people, who have been suddenly translated into an entirely different environment, abandon many of their old habits and rules of conduct. Very frequently the person who has been the subject of such alteration assures you that he or she has become "broadminded." This is a word that is really entitled to a rest: it has been sadly overworked. The truth is that in many cases the individual has simply changed, and the explanation of the change lies in the fact that the standard of morality accepted is the standard of convention. It is not, of course, denied that there are other elements in the determination. Personality is much too complex to be reduced to hard-and-fast explanations of this kind, but it is necessary to isolate elements of this character, and treat them for the moment as if they represented the whole motive in a particular decision, if we are to understand their influence.

There is always a danger to the docile mind of accepting recognised codes of conduct. This has its useful feature. It helps in the creation of habits, which, when they are in themselves good, influence character in a good direction. These are never wholly independent of the will of the individual. There is some faint trace of choice in a right direction discernible in such formations. The evil, however, resides in the fact that an exaggerated docility militates against the development of a strong personality in which external circumstances are made servants and not masters.

The attempt to introduce methods of what are called "mass psychology" in spiritual and ethical matters is exposed to this criticism. There is danger of creating a sentiment of dependence, so that when an environment is changed, moral clues seem to be largely lost. The danger becomes very acute when the individual's conscience is found in the pocket of the community.

The New Testament recognises the very great value of association, and enjoins the individual to continue not only in doctrine, but in fellowship, thus drawing all the moral force that is resident in an association of like-minded people to the interests of the Kingdom of God. But the New Testament most emphatically demands that each soul, while drawing this inspiration from the community, shall preserve close contact with the spiritual source of life, and study to have a conscience void of offence toward God, as well as toward man. Speaking generally, and allowing for the necessary modifications, the Roman Catholic Church exercises the office of a direct mentor. She claims that her officials are trained in principles of Moral Theology, and can supply rules and guidance for burdened consciences in nearly every crisis of life. It has been frequently noted that the result of this mode of procedure has been to create a community that is generally obedient to fixed rules in normal circumstances, but can be swept aside from its usual course of action by any strong counter-emotion. The picture of the Archbishop of Paris and a large number of priests and nuns joining whole-heartedly in the French Revolution is an historic illustration of this tendency. Someone is reported to have wished that all his enemies had one neck. The effect of submission to a dominant convention very nearly achieves this result in the moral sphere. The mass moves under a contrary impulse with almost the same freedom as it moved in its original attitude. The qualification is necessary because the forces of conservatism, and the elements of independent ethical decision, formulated notwithstanding the attempt at uniformity, prevent a complete swing over in any circumstances.

It is sometimes urged as an objection to the whole genius of the Protestant religion that the opposite tendency manifests itself. It is difficult to secure the co-operation of a number of independent well-informed minds. The advance of education, and the growth of a sense of individual

moral responsibility, make it more difficult than formerly to secure unquestioning obedience to any polity. There are evils attendant on this essentially modern aspect. Democracy has its weaknesses, due partially to the fact that the mass of the people are not yet emancipated from the instinct to follow the crowd, and partially to the fact that the spirit of independence coupled with different degrees of moral perception creates divergences in policy that are not easily reconciled. But, admitting these difficulties, it is manifest that on the whole a higher moral progress has been attained through the cultivation of independent judgment on the part of individuals. There is less danger of the results being lost, or greatly diminished in effect, through popular movements that have a lower moral appeal.

Lord Bryce has some important words in this connection: "The Reformation was in its essence the assertion of the principle of individuality, that is to say of true spiritual freedom. Hitherto the personal conscience had been a faint and broken reflection of the universal; obedience had been held the first of religious duties; truth had been conceived as a something external and positive, which the priesthood who were its stewards were to communicate to the passive layman, and whose saving virtue lay not in its being felt and known by him to be true, but in a purely formal and unreasoning acceptance. . . . The universal consciousness became the Visible Church; the Visible Church hardened into a government and degenerated into a hierarchy. Holiness of heart and life was sought by outward works, by penances and pilgrimages, by gifts to the poor and to the clergy, wherein there dwelt, however, little enough of a charitable mind . . . all this . . . was suddenly rent in pieces by the convulsion of the Reformation. . . . It was proclaimed that the individual spirit, while it continued to mirror itself in the world's spirit, had nevertheless an independent existence as the centre of self-issuing force, and was to be in all things active rather than passive. Truth was no longer to be truth to the soul until partly by the soul recognised, and in some measure even corrected; but when so recognised and felt, it is believed under the form of faith to transcend outward works and to transform the dogmas of the understanding; it becomes a living principle within each man's breast, infinite itself, and ex-

pressing itself infinitely through its thoughts and acts" (*Holy Roman Empire*, pp. 132-133, Oxford, 1864). It is contrary to this new genius to lay down minute regulations and model lives on a distinctive but uniform pattern. Every attempt to do so has resulted in the obscuration of some real moral principle. Guidance can be offered, profitable discussion can be undertaken, but the ultimate decision must rest with the individual. Where Scripture has not spoken clearly, and both the Old and New Testaments are sparing in the enunciation of specific duties, there is danger that the Lordship of Christ may be usurped if anyone attempts to prescribe to Christians the exact course of action they should take in given conditions. In the following pages, therefore, the applications will be sparing, and the discussion will illustrate an attempt to indicate those principles of conduct which may be deduced from Scripture.

It is not possible to separate the duties and virtues rigidly. Duty is that which is due in relation to some recognised code or some inner prompting of the spirit. Virtues are the acquired character or traits in character which result from the performance of duty. Another definition has sometimes been offered in which virtue is exalted above duty. Although this latter may justify itself by claiming a closer adherence to the etymology of the word, which is related to heroism or manliness, and has frequently been applied to these qualities in a pre-eminent degree, nevertheless it is a dangerous distinction in the ethical sphere. It implies that a lower contribution than that which is in the power of the individual may satisfy the requirements contained in our moral obligations. It is better, therefore, to preserve the distinction that is made above, and regard virtue as the inner consequence and necessary complement of duty performed. The popular conception of duty does not attach to it the idea of realisation of the best. Rather it suggests the imposition from outside of a command which is recognised as binding, though obedience is frequently distasteful to the individual. As a result people are found stating that they felt it their duty to do certain things, with the underlying suggestion that nothing but a positive sense of moral obligation would have induced them to take the step they did. If we are to describe the Christian service of Christ by the word "duty" we must remove from our minds all such hampering ideas. The service which the

Christian undertakes is a service of perfect freedom. Love sanctifies obligation, and the inner longing of the soul is in harmony with the outward performance of right action. The conception of the Psalmist, "The law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide," represents the true Christian attitude.

No doubt in certain instances personal feelings may obtrude themselves, and the painful consequences of righteous action may be so strongly present to the mind that the action presents itself as an obligation of which we would like to be relieved. But it cannot be emphasised too strongly that this is on the whole unusual. The normal experience of the Christian is that he does that which is right under the guidance and influence of the Divine Spirit because he himself is largely, though not wholly, right. The remaining conflicts are due to the presence of an indwelling principle of hostility, but the less this principle is permitted to come into evidence, being subdued through the active, vital help of Christ, the less will there be an appearance of necessity, and the greater the sense of spontaneity in our submission to the will of God. The inner and outer corresponds, and in the sense of harmony the popular interpretation of duty is merged in the higher conception that that which is best is peculiarly the expression of the desire of the soul. In this way, what a man ought to do becomes that which he desires to do, and the conflict between the commandment and self-satisfaction is resolved. This does not mean that obligations cease, but only that the individual is quick to recognise them, and finds the realisation of his truest self in this recognition. Wherever the obligation is distasteful there is a sense of inner sinfulness that invites contrition and confession. In fact, so far from the scope of duty being narrowed, it takes on an ever-widening significance as Christian life and conduct develops. That which was formerly regarded as a perfectly adequate fulfilment of obligation becomes, in the light of further knowledge and close union with the living Lord, pitifully inadequate. There is room for a continual growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Christian Ethics does not destroy, but on the contrary builds upon, Natural Ethics. As Archdeacon Hare observes: "The general scheme of moral observances prescribed by it was . . . nearly the same as that which the

reason and understanding of man, refined and ripened by the course of ages, had already laid down. That it was so is proved by the remarkable fact that the only ethical treatises which have maintained their authority through all ages and nations of Christendom, and which even at this day we know not how to supersede or dispense with, are those by the master of Greek philosophy and by the master of Roman eloquence. But Christianity breathed the breath of life into that which before was a body made of the dust of the ground, and which thus became a living soul. The code of duties might be nearly the same; but a spirit from heaven entered into it; and a light from heaven fell upon it" (*The Victory of Faith*, pp. 76, 77). So there are preserved to us the great principles of Natural Ethics, in which at least the following obligations are recognised:

(i) The duty to preserve life.

(ii) The duty to preserve one's freedom and protect the freedom of others.

(iii) The duty to avoid hindering one's neighbour's interests.

(iv) The duty to speak the truth at all times.

(v) The duty to preserve the interests of the community.

(vi) The duty to preserve the property rights of others.

But when we turn to the words of our Lord, which it is noteworthy have been adopted by Him as a correct summary of the ancient Jewish code, and which appear over and over again in the Old Testament, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, etc., and thy neighbour as thyself," we find a more inclusive principle than that of Natural Ethics, a principle which unites disparate duties, and secures a fuller development than is possible in any other system. The main spheres of Christian obligation are here presented to us, and may be summarised as follows:

(i) The recognition of the Divine Kingship and Fatherhood of God.

(ii) A recognition that true union with God is the highest freedom and the complete fulfilment of man's personality.

(iii) A recognition that our neighbour stands in such relation to us because he too is an object of God's love and mercy, and there is an ideal of one family named of God.

Modern political developments have created the idea of the natural rights of man. They are supposed to be embodied in the American Constitution, which declares that

"All men are born free and equal." It is obvious that this particular sentence will not stand very close analysis. There are mental and moral divergences which cannot be included and harmonised in a single phrase, but the Christian is compelled by his system to recognise certain natural rights in man. All men are to him alike children of a common Father and subjects of a common redemption. Such conceptions cannot be held consistently without producing important results in our relations to our fellow-man. Indeed, it might be said that it is failure to apprehend their significance that has resulted in those unhappy divisions which have wrought such havoc amongst mankind. On the other hand, there is a danger that a too hasty recognition of natural rights may imperil the equally rigid conception of natural responsibilities. If man has fallen from the high dignity of his created state, there may be a long and laborious movement before he enters upon the fulness of his inheritance, and is capable of realising what is involved in those rights which belong to him. It is the conflict of these two ideas, due to our imperfect development, that constitutes the essential feature in moral progress. We are slowly eliminating alien elements if we are moving toward God, and the final result must be a unity of moral purpose that transcends all difference of colour and race; but where the unity of moral purpose is not manifest, the subordinate differences are likely to find emphasis. Often external differences of race and colour conceal under them deeper divergences, and it is this fact that makes the whole question of interrelation so complex. As a consequence of this, many vexed problems cluster round the attempt to secure a sound base of progression which will realise the Divine ideal.

Closely allied with the principle of the natural rights of man is that of the dignity of the individual. This has been a matter of slow growth, and it is open to question whether even yet we have reached the position where every single individual counts as an independent recognisable unit, whose liberties must in no circumstances be invaded. The Reformation, as the quotation above given from Lord Bryce indicates, reaffirmed the dignity of the individual, which had been largely lost in the less democratic ages in Europe. The conception lies at the foundation of Christian democracy, but here, in the higher sphere, it can

be fully realised only when responsibility is placed on equal footing with right. The renewal of the individual through the working of the Spirit of God becomes again an essential feature in true progress, in which the unity of the whole is seen to be the full realisation of the powers of every part.

But it needs to be emphasised that unity is not uniformity. The Pauline conception of a body with its different functions is the truest ideal in moral conduct. All men have not the same powers, and cannot fill the same office whether in the Church or in the State. The dignity of the individual is not advanced by placing him in an impossible situation. The demand which Christian Ethics makes is that the powers which he possesses shall be developed to the full, and not that he shall be placed in positions for which he has not an adequate equipment. In this connection the conception of vocation is of paramount importance. St. Paul realised that even a situation that has been partly conditioned by a failure to realise the ideal may yet in given circumstances be the true calling of a servant of God. "Wast thou called being a bondservant? care not for it: but if thou canst become free, use it rather" (1 Cor. vii. 21).

In this great conception vocation is coextensive with all the activities of the individual. The call of God emphasises responsibility in every department of life, hence the Christian is not at liberty to undertake duties connected with ordinary avocations lightly. He is under responsibility to estimate satisfactorily his powers and opportunities, and to recognise that the avenues of usefulness open to him are part of the Divine provision for his full development. The ordinary occupations of life must be employed as a means of direct service to God.

In the middle ages, Christians were divided into two classes, "the religious" and "the secular." The cloistered life was supposed to offer peculiar facilities for the development of spiritual ideals, and a lesser standard was exacted from those who were engaged in ordinary business and were married. In the fourteenth century a change is noticeable in the general sentiment of the people. Contrasting the popular risings of the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries, Dr. Gwatkin writes: "(the peasant rising of 1381) is one of many signs which reveal the immense change of religious thought in England since the last great anarchy in Stephen's time. In those days the monks were re-

spected; now they were unpopular; then the monasteries were refuges from lawless violence; now they were its victims. In Stephen's time half a dozen new houses were founded every year; now there were very few, and the new endowments were scanty. In fact, the monks seemed more or less impostors now that they had almost abandoned even the pretence of living up to their professed ideal. Their fat and jolly look and love of comfort and good living suggested anything rather than the austerity of the old Rules. Small wonder if scandal made them out worse than they were. . . . Now that the worst of the mediæval anarchy was over, doubts of the mediæval ideal arose. They were scarcely yet formulated, but they were none the less real. Was the 'Religious' Life so certainly the most pleasing to God? Was religion the one proper business of life, so that secular work and secular learning were evils to be limited as much as possible? In short, learning had become a rival to 'religion'" (*Church and State in England*, p. 101). This growing spirit of uneasiness as to the validity of the monastic ideal increased rather than diminished, but it was the upheaval of the Reformation that brought forward prominently the wider conception that the Kingdom of God was a movement amongst men, extending far beyond the bounds of religious service, permeating every department of active life, and sanctifying every legitimate operation in society. It is necessary to remember that this is certainly the New Testament ideal. There is no division of human activity into religious on the one hand and secular on the other, except that ordinary division which calls different exercises of the individual by different names. The secular just as much as the religious must be brought directly under the control of God.

Virtue, the word ἀρετή in Greek, is connected with the idea of power or force; in its original use in Homer it referred particularly to manly qualities, and in that respect corresponds to the Latin "virtus," which means, of course, the strength as well as the character belonging to a man. The underlying idea conveyed by the word "virtue" would be that of power for right action. The hero is above external constraint, and is the arbiter in that sense of his own destiny. In Natural Ethics the virtuous man is conceived as one who has acquired by constant, deliberate, right choices the character which tends to

impel the individual to act instinctively in the right manner. The Christian regards virtue as the outcome of the grace of God putting into his mind good desires, but does not on that account, as we have already seen, deny or despise the influence of right habit. Many attempts have been made to give a classification of the virtues, and all of them may claim a measure of justification. A very common division is that which distinguishes the cardinal natural virtues—namely, wisdom, courage, temperance, in its wide sense of self-control, and justice (the word "cardinal" is derived from Latin, "cardo," a hinge, and in this connection means the qualities on which character turns)—from the added Christian qualities of faith, hope and charity, which were known as the supernatural or theological virtues.

It is perhaps not quite correct to regard Isaiah xi. 2 as a summary of virtues in any technical sense, yet the six characteristics of a righteous person ought to be noticed: wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. It is here that the difference between Christian and Natural Ethics again exhibits itself. Wisdom and understanding are regarded in Natural Ethics as inherent qualities of the soul that can, indeed, be developed, but are there, at least potentially, in every individual. Whereas in Christian Ethics these gifts are regarded as due to the overshadowing Spirit of the Lord. The link between God and man is thus closely forged. Apart from union with the Eternal even our natural gifts must wither. The hymn of charity in 1 Cor. xiii. distinguishes between activities and internal constituents of the soul. It brings before the reader the idea that unless our outward manifestations are informed by the Spirit of love, they are worthless. The three abiding qualities are faith, hope and charity, and of these the greatest is charity. It is easy to understand the Apostle's position. Faith which did not work by love could not be, in the nature of the case, faith in God. The hope which was separated from dependence on the power and grace of God could not be true hope. Hence both faith and hope must be grounded in love. The element of hope is native to the true Christian soul, and continues so long as that soul exists. Its essential character is one of complete dependence upon God. Even in eternity we recognise that we receive all from Him Who is the Source of life, and

consequently our attitude is one of expectancy which never suffers disappointment. Similarly, faith is an attitude of reliance which can never be abandoned.

We find another list of Christian virtues in Gal. v., where the fruits of the Spirit are given as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. It has frequently been pointed out that the list here given divides naturally into triads. Love, joy, peace, are constituent elements of the soul, prominent characteristics which determine the whole attitude towards life. Joy and peace are, of course, grounded in love, and it may perhaps be suggested that in combination they give the quality hope, to which reference is made in 1 Cor. xiii. Long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, refer to our attitude towards others. Longsuffering is the quality by which a man who possesses power to execute judgment refrains from doing so. It is not simply a patient suffering under affliction, but on the contrary a deliberate action by which restraint is put upon the exercise of power in the interests of another. Gentleness is a quality of grace, and has been rendered by some ancient interpreters of the word as suavity; the soft answer which turneth away wrath would come under this designation. Goodness is an active quality by which truth and righteousness are pursued even when a certain severity is necessary. The distinction made by Trench still holds: "His goodness, his zeal for goodness and truth, in rebuking, correcting, chastising. Christ was not working otherwise than in the spirit of this grace when He drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple (Matt. xxi. 13), or when He uttered all those terrible words against the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. xxiii.); but we could not say that His gentleness was shown in these acts of a righteous indignation" (*Synonyms of the New Testament*, lxiii). Faith, meekness, temperance, most probably have relation to our inner reaction when subjected to some outward stimulus. The precise meaning of the word "faith" in this context is disputed. By some it is rendered "fidelity," while others preserve its more usual meaning of "personal reliance." It is not necessary to discuss this distinction closely for our purpose, as in either case faith would be that attitude of soul which arises either when the individual is confronted with some definite responsibility or is called to repose on the grace and mercy revealed in Christ Jesus. Meekness is

the inner attitude of spirit which enables the individual to bear patiently with evil and evil-doers, recognising his own unworthiness and the all-wise disposition of God, Who permits such affliction to fall upon him. It is peculiarly the attitude of soul towards God, recognising that from Him comes all our good, and here again the distinctive feature of Christian Ethics emerges. Our conduct to our fellow-man is determined by our conduct toward God. Temperance is the righteous control of all our desires and activities, bringing them into conformity to the will of God, and exercising them for the benefit of our fellow-men.

It has been often noticed that what are called passive virtues, meekness, mercifulness, humility, find full expression only in the Christian system. There are hints of them in the Old Testament: "He that ruleth his spirit (is better) than he that taketh a city." They find their natural source in the conception of the greatness of God and the weakness of man, and can only obtain full exercise where the words of the Creed have full significance: "I believe in God the Father Almighty." It is also worth noticing that the four cardinal virtues, though they are mentioned continually in the New Testament, are found in a different form and setting from that which they occupy in the parallel Greek Ethics. The triumph of the Isthmian games is transferred to the Christian warrior, who battles against principalities and powers. Manly virtue takes on the character of faithfulness to truth against powerful opposition, a feature which produced in the early Church a great company of steadfast martyrs. Courage loses much of its physical quality for the more subtle form of witness against wrong and unrighteousness, patient continuance in well-doing, enduring to the end, resisting unto blood, striving against sin. Self-control is given a new direction. The end is no longer simply the maintenance of a poised mind in an ideal State, it is the subordination of a lower personal ambition to an eternal purpose. It is that buffeting of the body and bringing it under subjection that has as its reward union with those who, through the message of the Gospel, have entered into the eternal family of God. Justice takes on finer characters; it is not simply the harmony of ordered relations in a well regulated State, it is not merely the quality of fair dealing between man and man; nor is it the exercise of retribution on the wrong-doer, though all

these elements are included in the wide scope given to it in the New Testament. It is something greater, more all-embracing, than all these. It is the expression of the will of God, done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Such a sublime presentation invites the criticism that Christianity in expression has fallen far below its great ideal. That is true, but the reflection must ever be balanced with the counter-truth that the ideal has been operative, even though imperfectly, and from it has sprung the greatest ameliorative efforts that the world has ever seen. It has frequently been pointed out that St. Paul's statement in 1 Cor. xiii. was wholly novel at the time when it was propounded. Love was largely regarded as an individual emotion, and very often was associated with both licence and selfishness. It is a new feature in Ethics to make the principle of love the dominant power in the soul. Why did St. Paul say, "The greatest of these is love"? In the Greek system, as has been shown above, justice was the unifying bond, the test of a well regulated existence. The New Testament replaces justice by love. A hint of this superior system is found in the Greek presentation. Trench draws attention to the fact that the introduction of the idea of the equitable—which according to Aristotle "is just, and better than one kind of justice, not indeed better than absolute justice, but better than the error of justice which arises from legal generality . . . a rectification of law where it fails through generality (*Nic. Eth.*, Book V, chapter xiv, Welldon's translation, p. 172)—is itself a single evidence of the high development of Ethics among the Greeks."

But the Christian system does more than give a hint as to the rectification of general laws of justice. It places at the heart of its system the law of love, which tempers all the other qualities of the soul. It is difficult for the unreflecting to understand that love without justice would not be true love. It would inflict injury and wrong upon the undeserving. As Newman Smyth puts it: "Righteousness and justice are . . . essential to love as its inner truthfulness and integrity . . . justice enters into the vital and essential energy of love, so that without it God's love would cease to be in His world the moral power of universal harmony and joy. . . . Benevolence without an invigorating sense of justice is so much moral haziness, murky as it is

warm, and debilitating to men. . . . No life can grow to vigorous and wholesome fruitfulness except in an atmosphere cleared by justice for the full power and joy of love" (*Christian Ethics*, p. 376).

In the New Testament, love is the unifying bond of the virtues, and its place is rendered secure by the fact that it is the animating principle of God's movement towards man. If the Greek can speak of equitableness as something higher than some kind of justice, the revelation of grace in the New Testament puts God's love in this position. It is through love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that we realise our need of a new creation in Christ Jesus. The sense of God's love manifested in redemption breaks down the barrier between the sinner and the holy Judge. It enables us to enter into fellowship with God through faith, and gives us a conception of unworthiness, redeemed and purified through the spontaneous action of God Himself. Fellowship with God on such conditions argues peace on earth, goodwill towards men, or among men of goodwill. The same motive power that lifted the sinner from his misery must be operative in all movements for the benefit of mankind. It is easy to perceive that out of love such as this, the love of God to His world and to man in particular, and the answering love of man toward God, awakened by the display of grace, all the virtues naturally arise. Joy and peace are immediate consequences of the new relation with a reconciled Father.

But when man is confronted in our present imperfect world with hostile forces, inimical to true progress, he remembers that his Father is kind to the unthankful and the evil. He can endure with patience, knowing that love is unconquerable because in the Person of Christ it must ultimately triumph: "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." He is actively compassionate, exhibiting longsuffering towards the evil, because he himself has been the subject of the longsuffering of God. He controls his desires and ambitions, subordinating them to the heavenly purpose because love has been born in his soul, and love is not provoked. An all-dominating purpose destroys those elements of selfishness that issue in uncontrolled self-gratification.

Taking the Christian system as outlined above, the following summary of duties has been developed.

I. Duties in Relation to God

(i) The acknowledgment of Him as He is, a recognition of our true relation, and an acceptance of His holy will.

(ii) This inevitably results in active as well as passive obedience. God's commands ought to be our delight, and to receive immediate response from the heart.

(iii) There also follows the attitude of adoring worship. We stand in relation to God as One from Whom cometh all good, and He demands the response of our heart in grateful praise, permitting us the unspeakable privilege of seeking His face in prayer.

II. Duties in Relation to Self

(i) *Self-Respect.*—Newman Smyth has an interesting passage on the purifying power of love. A gift which is not worthy is an insult to the receiver. There must, therefore, be a consciousness of worthiness even in human love, and it is this feature that explains the emancipating character of a true affection. Here we touch upon a Christian paradox. We are nothing in ourselves, incapable of lifting our souls towards God. Yet the very fact that He has set His love upon us gives our life a dignity and worth. As the redeemed of the Lord, we must walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

(ii) *Self-Development.*—It is impossible to have a sense of worth without seeking by every lawful means to develop those potentialities which we discover in ourselves. The Christian life, because of the new character imposed upon it by virtue of its close relation to Christ, must become a life of growth. There are two conditions governing this development—God performs His work in us, and we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. A static condition is the antithesis to Christian experience. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

(iii) *Self-Preservation.*—There is a primary duty of man to conserve his being and all those qualities by which he may glorify God. Here again we reach a paradox. He that saves his life shall lose it. The paradox is resolved by our realisation of the fact that there is a wider comprehension than earthly existence. That which hinders the work of

God must diminish the powers of the soul, and therefore an earthly life chosen at such cost becomes a violation of the instinct of self-preservation. The heroism of men who died for a cause, often entirely uninfluenced by Christian considerations, is a parallel witness to the essential truth of the New Testament position that the life that is worth preserving is the life which is hid with Christ in God. But, subject to this necessary condition, it is a Christian duty to maintain existence, and jealously to guard all those powers of body and mind which contribute to the fulness of the existence thus safeguarded.

III. In Relation to Others

(i) The Christian must exhibit *brotherly love*. The life which consists in selfish regard is a denial of the fundamental principle of the gospel that God showed His love toward us, and spared not His Own Son. The motive of brotherly love, which is a natural quality, receives the most powerful reinforcement from the life and example of the Lord and Master. It was therefore that He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another."

(ii) Brotherly love must express itself in *service*. Every movement that makes for the benefit of humanity commands unquestioning support from the true child of God. If Terence could say, "I am human, and therefore nothing that is human is alien to me," much more has the Christian need to say, "I am redeemed, and nothing that is redemptive, in however small a measure, can lie beyond the scope of my active support."

Thus there is completed a circle of virtues and activities that ascends to heaven and lays hold of God, and reaches to the very edge of the pit, saving "some by fear, hating the very garments spotted by the flesh."

CHAPTER XX

THE PERSONAL LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN

I

HOWEVER IMPORTANT the roots of being may be in the unconscious and subconscious realms, the only life which can be the subject of moral direction is the conscious life of the individual. As has been pointed out before, it would be a great mistake to identify this conscious life with the whole. There is a basis of character formed by previous action that makes certain determinations probable, if not necessary, but the lower realm can only be reached, so far as man is concerned, through the higher. It is conscious action that creates inhibitions and releases impulses.

The most radical change in human experience issues in consciousness of what is called "conversion." Our Lord laid tremendous stress upon this experience: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Some of the elements in regeneration and conversion have been discussed already. It remains to present the actual consequences in the personal life.

Conversion is a new apprehension of the relation to God of the soul and is of so profound a character that it alters the whole outlook on life. It is described in the Gospels as passing from death unto life, and in the Epistles as a translation from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son. There is a tendency in some quarters to minimise the radical nature of this change. In a desire for the real development of Christian experience, which is praiseworthy, there is a danger of depressing the crucial fact of conversion. It is sometimes suggested, if not asserted, that a man may be converted and be very much the same after it as he was before it. It is impossible to reconcile such a view with the strong language of Scripture, to which reference has been made. Nor is it in accordance with New Testament teaching to suggest that conversion is a psychological phenomenon that attaches only to certain types of

individual, "the twice-born" in contrast to the "once-born." An examination of the ground on which this distinction is made will render it apparent that it proceeds from a shallow view of sin. The outrage upon immediate conventions is recognised, but the deeper evil of the soul is not brought into prominence. The mistake probably arises from confusing violent emotion and sudden resolution with the inner meaning of conversion itself. The Scripture teaching is that a change is necessary for every individual. As the Catechism of the Church of England expresses it, "Being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby (*i.e.*, by a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness) made the children of grace."

But there is no insistence in the New Testament on violent accompaniments in consciousness, though these are sometimes recorded in particular biographies, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus. It is necessary to observe this distinction if we are to apprehend the full force of the New Testament doctrine of conversion in its ethical aspect. It means that the soul of man is definitely turned away from sin and towards God, and that there is registered in consciousness, whatever form the registration may take, a definite resolve to forsake sin and to believe the promises of God, resting for salvation on the Person of Christ. Such a resolution, if it has any value at all, is an activity of the soul. It is not merely a conception of the value of the virtuous life, it is, on the contrary, a definite sense of need, and a definite commitment of the whole personality to the control and direction of the Saviour of men. Such an attitude must result in quite a number of readjustments in the spiritual life. It is in the region of the necessity and character of such readjustments that the progress in sanctification is found. The main consideration is the resolute determination to make God supreme in the life.

A further mistake needs to be guarded against. Conversion is an experience quite definite, even though the time of conversion or the circumstances are not present definitely in consciousness. But conversion is not simply a past experience, it is a change of nature, and the subject of it remains changed. As St. Paul expresses it: "Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin" (Rom. vi. 6. R.V.). The first movement of the soul towards

God ushers the individual into a new universe of being, and through the operation of the Spirit of God forms a habit which is dominant and influences all future action. The fact that there are other influences, which exert their force with varying degrees of power, is what makes the problem so complex. But the New Testament idea is that the attitude which issued in conversion becomes henceforth identified with the true self, while other influences are regarded as alien intruders, and enemies to the progress of the soul. This argument is developed with singular force in Romans vii.

II

The new attitude in relation to acts and choice may be summed up in the phrase " Christ is the standard of personal conduct." Individualism was of slow growth in the community, and we can see the necessity for this, as an individualism that had not been formed upon principles of collective activity would become more and more anarchic. The individual needed to realise his responsibility to the family, the tribe, the nation, and the assembly of God's people, if he were to have his life properly renewed and find an outlet for his activities. But with Christianity individualism reached its highest point: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." The barriers which even our social customs had erected break down, and each individual realises to the full the potentialities of his being. But the individualism thus attained has a new character, it is the true determining of the person, the glad acceptance of obligations, yet it places before itself a standard, the cultivation of a Christ-like character, and discovers in its individuality the universal, because it is approximating to the ideal of the perfect man. Hence it is no contradiction of individuality, but rather a full development of the true self when the new determination issues in service to others. There is a limit to this service laid down by the very law of the sacredness of each person. But this limit is only reached when the larger life of the soul is threatened. Even temporal life itself may have to be forfeited, not only in the interests of others, but, as we have seen, in the interests of the true health of the individual soul.

The law of service has its proper explanation in the universality of the appeal of Christ. If He is the Saviour of all men, then that which ministers to man's salvation cannot, in the last analysis, affect inimically the development of any human soul. It is this conception that lies behind the exhortation to lose our lives in order that we may find them. The Christian keeps before him "that one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves," and under the influence of this ideal gladly spends and is spent in the service of a Master Who came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

III

But the dignity of the individual creates certain moral convictions that terminate upon the self. There are duties and responsibilites to our own inner nature from which we cannot discharge ourselves without incurring moral censure. Very often such duties are classified under the head of self-reflection or of conscientiousness. The story is told of the officer in a remote frontier post who regularly dressed for dinner, because he felt that in his isolated position there was danger that he might otherwise lose hold of those principles of civilisation which are outwardly expressed in certain conventions.

Self-Respect

The first duty the individual owes to himself is *self-respect*. Perhaps the sternest moral censure that can be found in the Old Testament is in the words of Job, "I abhor myself," and we feel instinctively that there is a high moral attitude in the Apostle's claim that he studied to have "a conscience void of offence toward God and man." It is the inner arbiter that is the final determiner, and we owe it to ourselves and to others that we should not incur its censure. "Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that thing which he approveth." There is an old proverb which has a very considerable justification, "If you follow your conscience you may not go right, but if you disregard your conscience you are bound to go wrong." The inner integrity of spirit must be cultivated at all costs. Problems may arise concerning doubtful forms of self-satisfaction. It is a wise rule to give conscience in every case the benefit

of the doubt. A sense of inner disharmony vitiates the moral life. Shakespeare was certainly right when he said:

> " This above all: to thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Scrupulosity even in small matters is a trivial price to pay for that sense of serenity in the soul that leaves us unhampered from inner conflict, and enables us to face the duties of life with an undisturbed mind.

Self-Development

A second grave responsibility is found in the duty of *self-development*. We are put in possession by God of certain potentialities, and it is our duty to exercise them for our own good and the good of others. It is remarkable how constantly this particular responsibility is partly evaded. One of the evils which has followed from the increasing, and on the whole beneficent, control of the State in matters of individual development, such as education, vocation, and social organisation generally, is the tendency to acquiesce in a fixed standard, and to accept the State minimum as the maximum of achievement in certain directions. Possibly few would fall to the level of the youth of sixteen who, when he was asked if he had read Burke's *French Revolution*, replied, " I am out of books." He had completed the statutory regulation in the matter of reading, and had ceased to read.

But it becomes a serious question as to whether many Christians are not falling below the level of possible attainment in this matter. There is a tendency to limit the affairs of the soul to what are called religious or spiritual matters. There is also a tendency to live a largely parasitic life, even in relation to this limited conception. The full ideal of Christian experience would be to regard every gift as a talent which should be put out to best advantage in the service of the Kingdom. Henry Drummond has an important paragraph on this point: " It is significant that it was the man who had only one talent who was guilty of neglecting it. Men with ten talents, men of large gifts and burning energies, either direct their powers nobly and usefully, or misdirect them irretrievably. It is those who

belong to the rank and file of life who need this warning most. Others have an abundant store and sow to the spirit or the flesh with a lavish hand. But we, with our small gift, what boots our sowing? Our temptation as ordinary men is to neglect to sow at all. The interest on our talent would be so small that we excuse ourselves with the reflection that it is not worth while" (*Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, p. 112). It is the duty of a Christian to exercise all his powers, and to exercise them to the full.

Perhaps there is a greater decline in the cultivation of the mind than in any other department of our consciousness. The obligation "to think through" is more frequently disregarded than any other obligation. It is most imperative at the present time that Christians should recognise this duty; there are many voices raised which suggest in varied form that it is impossible to keep abreast with what is called modern thought, and retain the essentials of the Christian system. Severe discipline in thought is a most effective method of meeting this subtle suggestion. Our minds need to be furnished with the great truths that have been gathered from the various sources of knowledge, according to the measure of our capacity and the nature of our calling. It is the Christian who earns distinction for a conscientious discharge of duty, and a thorough acquaintance with the principles of his calling, who most truly glorifies God.

One feature of self-development is found in a man's vocation. The choice of a career should be determined in relation to our natural capacities and our temperament. Circumstances inevitably occupy a large part in deciding the line of life which the individual must adopt. But the dominant consideration, which does not ignore but relates all these to the individual's responsibility, is that which enables each person to say: "This is God's appointment, and is the sphere in which I can find the fullest exercise for those capacities with which I have been endowed." Prayer and thought should be given to the choice of a career.

Self-Preservation

The third duty in our summary in relation to the self is that of *self-preservation*. It might seem at first as if there was no very great necessity to lay emphasis upon this

particular duty. Most people are only too anxious to preserve themselves. Yet in the stress of modern life there has been an increasing tendency to suicide. The habit of coroners' juries of bringing in, if at all possible, a verdict of suicide while temporarily insane may contribute indirectly to the increase of this tendency, by removing from the overwrought individual any fear that his action will incur public odium, and reflect upon those who are dear to him. But the immediate cause of the increase in suicide is due to the very great strain of life. It is questionable whether the increased speed at which all things have been developed has issued in increased happiness. It is necessary, at all events, to emphasise the fact that a man has a duty to himself and others which demands in normal circumstances the preservation of his life.

The Stoic attitude, to which attention has been directed earlier, permitting the wise man to depart from life as he would leave a smoky room, is at heart peculiarly selfish. It contains the notion that the development of individual comfort and happiness is the final aim of existence. The Christian must rise higher than that. His life is a sacred trust from God, and it is his duty to remember that until God resumes that trust he is under obligation to continue to live. The burdens and anxieties which drive men to suicide should be committed to the Lord, Who is able to undertake for us and to supply all our need. There are occasions when God demands our life, and the supreme self-sacrifice becomes a plain moral duty. But we must be certain that the call of duty is present before we throw away this intimate possession given us of God. In every case where life hangs in the balance, and it is our duty to sacrifice it, there is present to consciousness some higher end which is attained at this great expense. A man dies to save a friend. The higher end of complete altruism justifies and ennobles the deed. But to abandon life because of inconvenience and sorrow is really the refuge of the coward. The only end which presents itself is release of the individual from unpleasant experiences, and the true Christian recognises that experience is a discipline of God, that in the end "yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It is necessary to take a very definite stand against the low evaluation of life which emerges in certain quarters at present.

There is something deeper in self-preservation than the safeguarding of our temporal life. Rightly understood it is the imperative duty of conserving all that makes for the fulness of being. Self-preservation from this point of view may be regarded as a gathering of the fruits of self-development. It includes our duty to the dominant culture of our time. All that is best and truest in human experience should be jealously guarded. Very acute problems present themselves along this line of thought. We have to regard ourselves as heirs of all the ages, and so far as we have attained to truth and righteousness, we are in duty bound to preserve not only the end, but the means. There is a responsibility to the heritage of the past. A spirit of advanced modernism constantly ignores this responsibility. The idea takes possession of the individual that he is done with the past, that its categories are outworn, and that his main duty is to adapt himself to the growing needs that daily emerge. The old problem of the Sophists comes to us dressed in the garb of this extreme modernism. It has found a powerful sanction in certain pragmatic theories. Truth is that which works. The slightest hitch in the machinery justifies the modern individual in saying: "This thing does not work, therefore it is not truth."

This loose attitude to the findings of the past runs directly counter to the law of self-preservation. It is a salutary reflection that we are unable to reconstruct completely the fabric of our social and mental life. Whether we like it or not, we are debtors to the past. It is our duty not only to acknowledge our debt, but to preserve the contribution the past has made for the benefit of those who come after. More particularly the Christian is bound to preserve spiritual truth. If indeed God has committed to us a revelation of His will, then we would be singularly failing in our duty if we suffered any portion of that revelation to disappear through our negligence. Scriptural truth can be developed, and in times past rich treasures have been discovered in the Christian deposit through the labours of diligent students, but it is necessary that we should assure ourselves that every modern contribution is a true development, lest we fall into the error of filching away portions of the truth of God. As an assistance to us in safeguarding against this danger, those propositions that have worn well are to be treated with greatest reverence. The Creeds

of Christendom, accepted by all branches of the Christian Church, though disputed in certain parts by professed members of the Church, have stood the shock of the Reformation, and have maintained themselves against considerable opposition at various stages of human experience. This consideration should weigh seriously with every thoughtful student, when he is considering the duty of self-preservation in relation to spiritual reality. Along these avenues self-reflection and conscientiousness find true expression, and the life of the Christian becomes full and effective.

But reflection must have material to work upon, and the Christian is peculiarly fortunate by reason of the fact that he is not left to his own devices, but is supplied with an Object to which he can direct all his thought. Here again the cardinal fact of revelation presents itself. It is necessary to disabuse our minds of the idea that the religious consciousness is altogether a natural development. It is a natural development, but it has been reinforced by an external message which lies beyond the power of man's unaided thought. The Christian cannot play fast and loose with the example and commandments of His Lord. They have for him supreme authority. It may be difficult at times to answer the question, What would Jesus do? And the difficulty is increased by the easy flippancy with which the question is answered by some unreflecting minds. But, however great the difficulty, the question constantly recurs, and no one can hope to be a true Christian who does not saturate himself in the mind of Christ. The amazing fact is, that the apparently isolated sentences recorded in the Gospels as coming from the lips of the Master do constitute a very powerful guide in every department of human activity. Just because they are the utterances of infinite Wisdom, they are capable of infinite expansion and application.

The duty of Bible reading has many aspects in connection with the development of the personal life of the Christian, which means this amongst other things, that he who is a constant student of its pages becomes thereby possessed of the mind of Christ. And there are given for our example not only the cardinal truths uttered by the Master, but the records of those who imperfectly, but nevertheless whole-heartedly, followed His teaching. St. Paul could

write: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." It is perhaps a concession to our weakness that there have been given to us the features of the sinless Life lived out in experiences more consonant with our own. The Spirit of Christ is here delineated as operating in those who are compassed about with infirmity. New Testament biographies are particularly helpful in this direction.

In this connection it may not be amiss to notice a characteristic that might, perhaps, more properly be brought under the heading of self-respect. There is a sacred reticence about New Testament biography that indicates for us the truth that there are secret recesses of the soul, relations between ourselves and God, that cannot properly be the subject of human confidences. Modern psychology has done much to help in pointing out that sometimes the overburdened soul receives comfort by unloading grief or sin to a confidant. There are not wanting instances of this in New Testament biography, and the outpourings of the Psalmists illustrate for us this aspect of human experience. St. Paul tells how God had mercy upon him and forgave his grievous persecution. He relieves his mind of a scruple concerning his reference to the resurrection of the dead at the moment of his arrest at Jerusalem. He acknowledges a measure of intemperance in his just indignation when the High Priest ordered him to be smitten. But while these instances afford justification for the modern psychological theory, there is much in the New Testament that guards against the abuse of this principle. The abuse consists in what may be called the emptying out of the soul, and leads to shallowness in character. There is an immediate relief in saying things, particularly unpleasant things, and the unfortunate dupe mistakes this immediate relief for a correction of the evil tendency. The soul that is ready with confidences to all and sundry becomes incapable of a fixed purpose in life. The inner determination, which should spring from the reservoirs of character, tends to be supplied by the advice and counsel which is so eagerly sought and so frequently misapplied in practice.

It is noticeable that the New Testament does not give us inner details of the conflicts and temptations and burdens of the great central characters; it gives us, to use the modern

expression, an "objective" rather than a "subjective" presentation. As a remarkable illustration of this reticence, it may be noted that Peter nowhere refers in his sermons to his denial of our Lord. Again, we are given surprisingly little detailed information regarding the deep spiritual experiences through which the Apostle Paul must have passed. The New Testament contents itself with recording inner spiritual reactions to well-known acts of the individual, and sometimes contents itself with recording the act itself. The New Testament method for relieving the burdened soul is to encourage the individual to cultivate such a sense of the compassion of Jesus Christ and the nearness of God as to find in these circumstances the needed relief for pent-up emotion. To pour out the soul to God is the highest achievement, and there is grave danger that the lower method may be sought, so that human beings seem more real, more sympathetic, more helpful, than God in Christ. This is a danger which must be avoided at all costs, and a study of Christian biography as revealed in the New Testament helps us to avoid it.

The second great principle which provides assistance in this direction is the oft repeated duty of acknowledging our faults and making restitution. The individual who recognises when his brother is wronged, and makes confession of the wrong done, repairing it as far as it is in his power, develops a strong, healthy character. There are reserves in his soul known only to God, but there is a frankness to his fellow-man that checks any possibility of a rankling sense of enmity or a growing feeling of injustice.

But Christian biography—and in this we would include the stimulating stories of heroes of the faith, not confining ourselves to the instances in the Old and New Testament biography—has another great advantage. The picture gallery presented to us in the Epistle to the Hebrews includes in it a group presentation of the Maccabean worthies, and those who counted not earthly possessions or life itself dear to them because of their love and devotion to God. The list has been greatly extended since those days, and we do well to remind ourselves that "the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." There is an inspiration in carefully chosen biography that we do not well to be without.

At the same time even here a danger presents itself. We should be followers and not mere imitators. No two human beings are constituted quite alike, and all that a biography, however carefully written, can give us is a general principle of conduct. To imitate details is to lose the wood for the trees, and it may not be out of place to add that biographies, if we are to gather their full inspiration, should be used rather sparingly.

The word "biography" is modern, and "autobiography" does not emerge until the nineteenth century. The word "biography" appears once in Greek literature, in the Lexicon of Photius in the ninth century, which seems to be evidence of the sparing use of this method of instruction by the ancients. The earlier word for biography in English literature is "confessions." Carlyle draws attention to the extension of this habit in the nineteenth century, and there is danger that, in the multiplicity of comparatively feeble records, a rather base form of hero-worship may take the place of the more robust conception of a strong example which ought to be followed.

In relation to self-preservation, and the duty of using life to the full, the tendency to monasticism and asceticism again reveals itself. As has been pointed out already, there was some excuse for the earlier hermits and monks, who found the pressure of a heathen environment too great, and withdrew from a world that they felt themselves unable to combat. But such withdrawal has frequently in it an element of that same cowardice which reaches its extreme form in suicide. Safeguarding of the individual soul takes the place of the Pauline urge, "that I may by all means save some." Further, the extension of monasticism has done much to bolster the idea of a double character in life. The secular man is supposed to be a sort of slave to the needs of the world. There are necessary duties which must be performed if humanity is to continue to exist, and, because of the necessity, certain individuals are relieved of the obligation to live the truly Christian life. The married state is something less desirable than celibacy, but, in order that the race may continue, the less desirable is conceded to a large body of people. Similarly, all mundane affairs are touched with the slime of the pit, and to have contact with them is to be defiled. The business man is encouraged to look upon the monk as belonging to

a higher order of godliness, and, as a consequence, too readily excuses himself when confronted with a certain laxity in moral principles; it is part of the necessity that belongs to the conduct of affairs. The Christian must set his face against any such suggestion of a double standard. For him, the position in which the individual finds himself is a calling of God, and he can glorify his Lord in every human activity.

Asceticism is a more subtle form of maldevelopment than monasticism, and is all the more dangerous because there is a true asceticism as well as a false. Every act of self-denial, every choice of the hard rather than the easy road, may be described as asceticism, but the particular form against which the Christian must wage unceasing warfare is that which regards affliction of the body, or self-denial of any kind, as in itself meritorious and contributory to spiritual success. As Dr. Newman Smyth expresses it: "The idle, cloistered saint, the unclean and uncomfortable monk, the soul whose moral life has been stunted and starved in the midst of human relations which are good, is the offspring of this illicit sundering of the ideas of virtue and happiness" (*Christian Ethics*, p. 119). To adopt such an attitude is to turn a means into an end. When the Christian feels compelled, for his own sake or for the sake of others, to abstain from that which may be lawful but is not expedient, he ought not to delude himself with the idea that there is any merit in the abstention. It is the purpose which lies before the soul that is of transcendent importance. "If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh." The abstention or non-abstention was in itself a matter of indifference, but in relation to the worth of another soul it became a matter of vital importance. This is the true test by which all the perplexities of conduct should be resolved. The Christian keeps before himself the glory of God and the salvation of men, and even the minor details of his daily life are consciously or unconsciously regulated with a view to these supreme ends.

It is thus that a true asceticism cuts itself off from that illicit growth, which attaches peculiar virtue to extravagances of conduct, and frequently reduces the Christian system of perfection to a level with the ideals of an Indian fakir.

Closely allied to this excess of asceticism in relation to

outer customs and habit is the danger of failing to preserve the mean between the life of contemplation and the life of action. Early in the Christian Church the difficulty was felt so keenly that an attempt was made to preserve the balance, not in the individual, but in the community. Contemplative orders were founded to enable certain individuals to set themselves free for this duty, and the ordinary individual regarded himself as wholly relieved of the necessity for serious and sustained reflection. Dr. G. G. Coulton suggests that a kind of bargain was struck between the self-mortifying monk and the ordinary man of the world. As he puts it: "The world-cleric, however unwilling to abandon society for his own part, was quite willing that others should do so; the Middle Ages laid immense emphasis on the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice; and everywhere we find the bargain, tacit or expressed, 'You shall mortify your body; you shall amass a treasury of merits; you shall pray for me, and I will contribute to your sustenance.' The monk, on the other hand, was glad to have the secular cleric as his ally against the common enemy of Christianity. If, therefore, it was inevitable that Christendom should separate in practice on the question of cloister-life and world-life, there was no reason in theory why both should not work together" (*Five Centuries of Religion*, p. 18). This general bargain found at least tacit recognition in relation to the duty of contemplation.

But the Christian must learn that his personality is a whole, and its completeness cannot be supplied through the relation of any experience in another. We are called alike to a life of contemplation and a life of action, and it is in the ordered balance of these two that we find full serenity and true peace. The life which is a life of pure action tends more and more in the direction of shallowness and opportunism. The life which is the life of entire contemplation tends more and more to become mystic, unreal, and positively harmful. Fortunately, in our workaday experience, it is not possible to have a life of action without any contemplation, or the reverse, but it is painfully possible to disregard the proper proportions in our spiritual development. The New Testament invites us again and again to think and to judge. Our Lord's challenge to His opponents was: "Why even of ourselves judge ye not what is right?" and St. Paul exhorts the Corinthians: "I

speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." A true judgment cannot be formed without careful reflection. Not only so, but the bursts of loving adoration toward God and our Lord which are discoverable in the Pauline Epistles illustrate for us in a very direct manner the intensity of his contemplation.

There is a danger in the present day that this aspect of ethical culture may be somewhat overshadowed by the practical demands which crowd in upon the individual. The tendency finds expression in such phrases as "Does it really matter what a man thinks?" If this were to be pressed to its logical conclusion, it would divorce action from its springs in thought and reflection, and make us almost altogether automata. It is the man who thinks much who can really be counted upon to have a fixed policy in practical action. He is not as likely to be caught by the wave of a passing sentiment, and borne unresisting in a particular direction. It is not in vain that the Christian is encouraged to meditate upon these things. "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." It is true that the word "meditate," which we have taken from the Authorised Version, while it is applicable to the careful reflection of orators and rhetoricians, has in it an element of contriving, giving attention to, practising, and thus it serves as a very helpful note of transition from the reflective to the practical life. The Christian's meditations should never be divorced from action. The inner reflection should always have its proper outward manifestation. Any new truth that breaks upon the soul should be made, as far as possible, the subject of communication to others. Any fresh vision of God's mercy and grace should be the object of immediate thankfulness to Him. We are not given treasures of thought simply to gratify our own inner feeling of repose. These things, as all else in the Christian life, are instruments in the service of God, so there is a very close relation between the inner and the outer life. It is expressed for us very clearly in St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians: "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and builded up in Him, and stablished in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding

in thanksgiving" (ii. 6, R.V.). The Christian walk is here regarded as the consequence of being rooted, builded, and stablished in or by faith. The divorce of the one from the other must result in weakness.

It is perhaps not recognised as fully as it should be that it is this inner life of contemplation that gives quality to actions. The soul that leans on God recognises the will of God, and furthers that will in daily conduct. The soul, on the other hand, that conforms to popular sentiment may indeed do some useful things, but has lost the inner connection with eternal verity that gives durability and true direction. Action without thought must be fitful. Thought without action is nearly always paralysing. The true balance is found in a walk with God, where the inner communion is maintained by Him, and the outer action controlled by His Spirit. False asceticism is laid aside; monasticism is regarded as an unworthy desertion of plain duty. Contemplation is cultivated as offering those secret reserves of strength that enable the soul to walk in the way of God's commandments. The result is a Christ-like man. He stands in relation to the community round him, he is set in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation amongst whom he shines, as a light in the world. He does not withdraw himself from ordinary activities, and while the prayer "lead us not into temptation" is continually on his lips, and he is mindful of his weakness, he does not seclude himself from the incidents and accidents of daily life. His otherworldliness is not the otherworldliness that grasps the hope of heaven by ignoring the duties and responsibilities of earth, so far as that is possible. It is the otherworldliness of one who lives his life here in all the fulness that belongs to his place in a common social order, and yet whose every action is irradiated with a glow that comes from the eternal Kingdom. He does the same thing as his fellow-man, but he does it differently, as one who sojourns here with the full consciousness that his true citizenship is in heaven. Such men are not unpractical. They are strong characters, who carry through the ordinary purposes of life with resoluteness and determination, but they have a practicality which reaches far beyond the possibility of an immediate or temporary self-gratification. In times of difficulty they endure as seeing Him Who is invisible, and at all times they are conscious that they

must give an account unto Him Who judgeth all men. To increase the number of those who have this high sense of vocation, and this intimate touch with eternal reality, is to further the cause of Christian Ethics more effectively than by any other means which can be imagined.

The Christian, then, uses the world and the things of the world, recognising that it is the guilt of man and the malignancy of spirits of evil, and these alone, which have brought discord into this world of ours. In view of the existence of this perversion of God's good gifts, the Christian is watchful. All things are lawful unto him, but all things are not expedient. He considers his actions in relation to the redemptive purposes of God, and regulates his conduct, not only for his own advantage or pleasure, but in relation to this high purpose of man's salvation.

An immediate question here obtrudes itself. In relation to ordinary conduct, the Christian often must do very much as another man. The difference of action may be comparatively small, though the difference of motive may be very considerable. If a Christian is a fishmonger, he will buy fish after much the same manner as his neighbouring competitor in the fish business, who is an atheist. It will be in very subtle distinctions in business that his Christianity will emerge.

But what is to be said about the moral reformer? Every Christian is called upon to awaken men to a sense of their absolute obligation to God, and this sense is often dulled by the too ready acquiescence of the community in conditions and customs which fall below the level of the best. The question that occasions perplexity is, "What and how far can the reformer act on his intuition and convictions in contradiction to the community of which he is a member?" There is no ready-made solution to this problem, and yet the root of it may be found in the cultivation of an intense passion of sympathy and understanding for those with whom his lot is cast. Too often reform has taken on the garb of mere denunciation. And we must not be blind to the fact that where a small and enthusiastic section of the community is clamant for reform, there is danger that personal vanity may be mistaken for consuming zeal. "In the kingdom of the blind," says the old proverb, "the one-eyed man is king." The Christian must guard himself against the insidious temptation to become a champion

of lost causes when he cannot be a leader in any other direction.

The New Testament offers careful guidance here. There are two positions, apparently contradictory, and yet laid down with equal emphasis. The one is that it is our duty unceasingly to proclaim the truth. The other is that we are under an obligation to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. The apparent contradiction lies in the fact that human ordinances are the product sometimes of unregenerate, and always of imperfect, humanity. The truth, on the other hand, is uncompromising and absolute. The only possible harmony that can be achieved in relation to these two principles is the harmony that comes through an ever-increasing apprehension of truth. The Christian proclaims the law of God. The Christian, saving only his conscience, submits to the law of man. When he undertakes a movement of reform he does so in the spiritual realm. He pleads, entreats, exhorts, if by any means he may enlist others in the task of remedying evils.

St. Peter felt the necessity of warning the early Christians along the line that has been here indicated. "Let none of you suffer . . . as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed" (1 Pet. iv. 15-16). Here there are two facts, both of which should operate strongly in the mind of a reformer. Undue interference with the liberty of others does not ultimately further the Kingdom of God. We can exhort, but it is not given to us to command until such time as the moral conscience of the body politic falls into line with our conscience. But at the same time we cannot be silent. There is a call to the Christian to bid men forsake that which is evil, however deeply rooted it may be in the customs of the community. And we are further warned that sometimes, in consequence of our exhortation, by reason of our individual testimony, we may suffer. The community does not always take patiently efforts towards its renewal or reformation. The conventional dames of the Victorian era described Florence Nightingale as "a shameless hussy." The peasants in the Cheddar Valley thought that Hannah More was gaining a right to send them to the Barbados when she started her schools for the poor. The reformer must meet opposition and suffer obloquy, and yet he must stand clear

of every unworthy appeal, of every unlawful interference, and glorify God by a blameless life and, so far as his conscience permits, by exemplary submission to all those conditions that constitute the universe of his activities. It is only prayer and faith, the cultivation of the inner life of contemplation, that will set him upon the mean course whereby he can truly glorify God.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE COMMUNITY

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to separate the personal life of the Christian from the life of the community in which he dwells. This has been abundantly evident in our previous discussion, yet it is possible, if the distinction be not maintained too rigidly, to discuss the attitude of the Christian under its different aspects.

God has constructed human life on a federal plan. It has often been noticed that the human being has a longer period of helpless dependence than any other creature. Tutelage occupies a much more important part in human life, and the tendency has been to extend the period as intellectual power has developed. There are, at present, acute controversies on the question of the school-leaving age, and it may be said generally that a longer training is demanded for efficient service to the community than is necessary amongst less developed peoples. A general foundation in knowledge should precede that special equipment which fits a man for his particular duties in life, and all this requires time. The essential unit is the family, and it is ordained of God that children should be, at least normally, under the direction of their parents or guardians until they attain a considerable measure of maturity. Restraint should be relaxed gradually, until at last the fully developed character is formed, and a status of independence is reached. But the very fact that the child has been so long under wise control has created a sense of responsibility to others, and an idea of a common interest in a common good, which can never be lost. In fact, all the later experiences in life tend to strengthen this primitive conception. The boy who is released from family control finds himself ushered into a world of business relations and national conceptions in which he becomes a factor, and which opens to his mind a wider whole.

It is not necessary to follow in detail the various ideas that have clustered round this natural evolution. It is not necessary to accept the findings of all philosophers who have

dealt at large with the subject. It is sufficient for ethical consideration that the world in which we live is a world of relation to other beings like ourselves, so that no man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself. It is not too much to say that the true self is a social self. Alexander Selkirk, or the poet who represents his sentiment, was surely right when he said:

> " O Solitude ! where are the charms
> That sages have seen in thy face ?
> Better dwell in the midst of alarms
> Than reign in this horrible place."

The " desert island man " carries with him certain characteristics of his former social environment, and, when he is condemned to a life of isolation, his being becomes narrowed instead of truly developed. We must not forget that the so-called " true child of nature " requires the sharpening process of intercourse with his fellow-man, if he is to represent a fully developed human life. Green goes so far as to say that morality is only possible in society, and certainly much of our present moral code would have little meaning in a state of splendid isolation. Children who are condemned to a backward and largely non-social existence, like the jungle children in India, are frequently mentally defective, and always require the carefully graded stimulus of intercourse with like companions before their powers are realised and their natural capacities properly developed. The most barbarous punishment that a cruel age decreed was complete solitary confinement. Byron gives a graphic description of its consequences, touched with the fire of poetic genius, in *The Prisoner of Chillon.*

For this reason the growth of cities, which is the first form of imperial control, and the consequent interchange between them, has proved a powerful factor in developing arts and culture. The book of Proverbs tells us, " Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend "; and we are not surprised to discover that the civilisation of the past emerged in populous areas, where there was central control and continued interchange of thought. The Christian recognises that duties towards the family, the neighbour and the State are God-given, and that it is impossible for him to fulfil the will of God unless he pays due regard to the important social institutions ordained for

man's good. As civilisation develops, and the parts of the world become more and more closely linked together, these obligations become more imperative. It may be said in a sentence that the Christian who has before him the picture of the body with many members, cannot evade or neglect his organic responsibilities. These are expressed in the Church for the higher purposes of worship, spiritual development, and the great battle against evil. But the Church is not the only organism to which the Old and New Testaments bear witness. Men are bound together in the bundle of life; the powers that be are ordained of God, and we must love our neighbour as ourselves. It was an old saying of Aristotle that man is a political animal. The gregarious instinct finds expression in the family, in the narrow but yet wider circle of our immediate neighbours, and a fuller development through the tribe to the State. At every stage it belongs to the genius of humanity to draw up rules for the regulation of life. The Christian cannot divorce himself from relation to these rules embodied in all civilised communities in the forms of law. The State undertakes certain responsibilities to its citizens, and the citizens in turn owe certain obligations to the State. In the Greek world Ethics was regarded as a branch of politics. With our wider view of the sacredness of the individual, the situation is almost reversed, and politics becomes a branch of Ethics. But no insistence on the sacredness of the individual can absolve the student from the duty of regard for the political circumstances of his time. All that has been said concerning the realisation of our individual life through intercourse with others emphasises this aspect.

There is a tendency in some quarters to reduce politics to the narrow range of party positions. The democratic system, under which most readers of this book live, tends to throw into relief the immediate problem with which the community is occupied, and on which sharp divergences of opinion become apparent. The deeper significance of our political life is thrown into the background. Because we normally obey the laws, we are apt to forget that in the last analysis we are the lawmakers. Some have argued, on this account, that it is the duty of the Christian to abstain from all political action. Some enthusiasts have gone so far as to surrender our parliaments entirely to the devil. The word "politician" is frequently used as a term of obloquy. So

far as men are content to become party hacks and attempt to employ politics as a game through which certain advantages may accrue to them as individuals, they are responsible for this lowering of what ought to be a very sacred term.

There is much in modern politics, as there is much in modern citizenship, that needs the purifying influence of Christian Ethics. But no one has been foolish enough to suggest that because caprice and gluttony are very evident in the matter of consuming food, therefore the Christian should not eat at all. It is just as impossible for the Christian to avoid the influence of politics as it is for him to avoid the influence of food. The same course is demanded in both cases. The provision of wholesome food and the regulation of hours of eating has done more to check gluttony and to control caprice than all the learned exhortations of earnest people. In a similar way, the voice of the righteous man, wisely directing the thought of his contemporary, will do more to purify politics than all the denunciations that have been levelled against unworthiness in the pursuit of it. Here, as elsewhere, the Christian is called to make a wise decision. There are features of party politics in which he shares the liberty of his fellow-subject of having an opinion of his own, framed by the best judgment he can form on the possible issue of the proposals which lie before the community. But there are other elements in politics in which his course has been determined for him immediately by his relation to his Lord. It may be that he must remain in a minority in some matters. It may be that his influence will not prove effective in his day or generation, but there are no means by which he can absolve himself from exercising to the full any right which may be conceded to him, in order that he may, so far as his powers carry him, determine the course of events for the glory of God and the good of man. It is a one-sided and defective conception of a Christian's duty which teaches him to concern himself wholly with heavenly matters, and suffer the ordinary conduct of affairs to take its course apart from any intervention of his.

Evolutionists, as we have already seen, trace the course of development of modern institutions from the two instincts of self-preservation and self-propagation. The latter instinct causes the individual to realise himself in posterity, and transfers his interest from his own well-being to the

well-being of those who are bound to him by ties of natural affection. As a result of these two primitive instincts, conflict arises between the immediate satisfaction of the self, called egoism, and the consideration of the interest of others, called altruism. The balance between the two constitutes the right development of man as a social being. Rational Ethics has sought to find the solution of the conflict by placing man's good in something that is of social worth, and we have seen that there is considerable justification for this view. Dr. Hutchison Stirling in his Gifford Lectures tells of a miner who had lost sight and hearing and the power of movement through a colliery accident. Dr. Stirling says that his world was reduced to the experience of the cat rubbing his legs. It was a sad picture of a closed-in life, and for the purpose of the illustration no doubt the gracious gift of memory was somewhat minimised. The man who lives for himself narrows his world until at last it merely represents a present fleeting gratification.

But the Christian has the true solution of the problem which is created by egoism and altruism. Not only does he recognise with the advocate of Rationalistic Ethics that true worth is a social quality, but he goes deeper, and discovers the explanation in a permanent relation of all souls to God. My neighbour's worth and interest are mine, not merely because I am possessed of the same nature and must therefore pursue the same ends, but because I have come from the hand of Him Who unites all men in a gracious redemptive purpose, and has ordered the scheme of things after such a fashion that many sons shall be brought into glory. It is the abiding sense of God's all-controlling purpose that helps the Christian to realise that, however great may be the superficial collision between his interest, regarded as an immediate good, and the interest of the whole, regarded as a remote fulfilment of a great ideal, there cannot be an ultimate contradiction because life itself is taken up into the wider comprehension of eternity, and God must ultimately be all in all.

When the individual conscience is awakened to a sense of responsibility towards those institutions that unite men in ever-widening comprehensions, certain immediate responsibilities become at once apparent. These have been summed up in ethical text-books under the following heads:

A. The Duty of Justice

Too often this obligation is evaded. It has been noted as a characteristic of English people, due perhaps to the fact that from a very early time a measure of democracy is apparent in their political machinery, that there is a strong sense of the necessity of upholding law in the mind of the individual citizen. A country that has been constantly disturbed by internal conflict, and in which the machinery of justice has often broken down, does not, as a rule, develop this sense. It is rather a mark of present-day conditions that there is danger of our losing, to some extent, this ideal. The average citizen, accustomed to the comparatively smooth working of administrative processes, hardly realises how much the administration is dependent on the goodwill of the community. It may be hoped that a strong sense of justice operates where consideration is given to transactions between man and man.

Where the individual is a principal in the action, if he is a true Christian he naturally, almost automatically, observes at least the duty of justice. He pays his debts—if he can. He tenders the correct tram fare, even when the conductor might be disposed to accept a lesser amount through collection after a section has been passed. In all these matters the average citizen is at least moderately scrupulous. But it is difficult to carry the principle further, and to support the adminstration where the individual is not directly involved. Frequently people are heard to say, " That is a matter for the police," or, may it be added in a chilly whisper, " for the income tax collector." In these matters the Christian is called upon to determine his line of action. The duty of supporting justice abides. He cannot discharge himself of that responsibility by the simple expedient of delegating it to the paid officers, who are employed by the State toward this end. He is a party to the law, and it is his duty, in normal circumstances, to see that the law is observed by his neighbour, as well as to see that his neighbour is given his legal rights.

Sometimes confusion has been created here by the further Christian law that the satisfaction of legal rights is not all that is required of a servant of God. The efforts of those who enforce strict canons of justice are frequently deprecated. They are accused of being harsh and unsympathetic in

their outlook. Offences against the existing legal code are condoned on the ground that the higher law of love permits the individual to ignore them. Here, as in many other cases, the Christian has a difficult task to discharge. It is his duty to determine how far his active personal intervention will further the ends of justice. In law an individual who is known as a "common informer" exists. The principle behind the creation of this type of citizen is that it is within the right, and may be very often within the duty, of an ordinary person who has no direct interest in a certain procedure, to acquaint the authorities with a breach of some regulation. The common informer shares in the odium that attaches to informers generally, and possibly because of this, he is usually allowed to repose peacefully in the tomes of statute law. He seldom materialises. There is a justification for this infrequent appearance. If every individual felt himself under obligation to direct attention to every breach of the law, the staff of recorders would have to be increased so much that the burden would be intolerable.

The Christian must recognise that the bringing of an individual to justice through his overt action may result in greater evil than follows from the failure of the proper legal machinery. But this does not relieve him of the duty of supporting law. It places upon him the onus of deciding how best the general machinery that exists for the well-being of the community shall be allowed to function. That is to say, he has to decide whether, all circumstances being considered, the ordinary processes of law, even though they are imperfect, are adequate to the maintenance of social well-being, or whether they require to be supplemented by a deliberate intervention on his part. No citizen would hesitate to protect a defenceless woman from a burglar, and most citizens at least are quite ready to join in the cry: "Stop thief!" This is a recognition of the duty of justice. The particular application of it must be determined by the individual in view of the special circumstances in each case. But the charge of harshness and lack of sympathy should never be preferred against those who obey the call of justice. We may consider that their action in certain instances is mistaken, but to place the law of love in opposition to the law of justice is to introduce an inner disharmony that would make Ethics impossible. The lower obligation is never disregarded, but on the contrary more fully fulfilled,

in the higher. He who loves without justice transgresses more seriously than he who is just without love, though both fail to realise the completeness of Christian perfection.

B. The Duty of Veracity

The obligation to tell the truth is something that our neighbour has a right to enforce. The whole structure of society is based upon the principle that truth between man and man is essential. This elementary duty is strongly enforced by the authority of our Lord Himself. "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay" contains the necessary implication that the simple word of the individual can be relied upon absolutely. Any tendency to weaken the force of this obligation needs to be strongly resisted. Whittier has given us the lines,

> "Praise and thanks for an honest man,
> Glory to God for the Puritan,"

and he has indicated in them a remarkable feature of Puritan Theology. It would be a mistake to suggest that Puritanism had a monopoly of truth. Indeed, the concept of this binding obligation found forceful expression long before Puritanism, as a particular system, reared its head. But it remains one of the standing glories of that particular type of theology that it emphasises truthfulness as a cardinal virtue and an outstanding characteristic of the true Christian. In this, as in many other matters, the Puritan followed closely the earlier theology of Augustine, who wrote: "A man is deceived when he thinks what he says to be true, and it is really false: a man lies when he thinks something to be false and says it as though true, whether it be really true or false. Mark the addition which I have made. Whether it be really true or false, yet, if a man thinks it false and asserts it as true, he lies, for he is aiming to deceive. What good is it to him that it is true? He thinks it false, and says it as though it were true. True it is in itself, what he says, in itself it is true: to him it is false. What he is conscious of and what he speaks are not the same: he thinks within himself that one thing is true, and utters another as though it were true. His heart is double, not single, he does not bring out what he has there. The double heart has long

since been reproved: 'Deceitful lips . . . dissemble in their double heart' (Ps. xii. 2). What is deceit? When one thing is pretended and another done. Deceitful lips are when the heart is not single" (*Sermons*, 133, vol. v, p. 739).

Two factors need to be noticed particularly in regard to veracity: (i) The inclusive character of the obligation. (ii) The possible limitation in its application.

(i) Many people are unaware that certain forms of carelessness are an offence against the requirement of truth. Loose statements that have not been and cannot be verified are lightly passed from mouth to mouth. This is contrary to the obligation of strict veracity. Further, intellectual truth is as important as any other form of truth, and great care should be taken that no false sentiment of liberality should be allowed to weaken our faithfulness to our convictions. The Christian should speak the truth in love. He should not dissemble.

(ii) But the question arises: Are there any occasions in which the demand for the truth cannot be held to exist? Rigid moralists like Augustine and Kant hold that in no circumstances can the demand for truthfulness be abrogated. But the great majority of ethical students are disposed to admit exceptions. Three cases are usually cited: (*a*) War. (*b*) People who are unable to receive truth, as madmen, sick persons, children. (*c*) People who seek the truth for plainly unworthy and sinful reasons. In these cases it is held that the ordinary relations that govern human conduct have been suspended. The right to kill which is claimed in war removes all obligation to supply the truth to an enemy. Madmen, sick persons and children are below the level where certain truths can be appreciated at their full value. The sick person is too weak to be subjected equitably to the strain occasioned by dangerous or painful intelligence. The murderer who seeks his victim's life is beyond the pale and has forfeited his right to ordinary treatment. In all such cases there must be a clear recognition of the ground on which ordinary truthfulness is held to be abrogated. There must be a positive concept of the good aimed at which demands the abrogation of ordinary law. And the good must be justified on a sound ethical principle that can be separated completely from the individual interest of the person who proposes to forfeit truth. Prayer and watchfulness will lessen greatly the abnormal instances in which it

is best to adopt such a course. The instances must be recognised as abnormal. To put the thought in another form: it is only where social unity has been disrupted by war, by permanent or temporary incapacity of some of the units, or by vice, that the obligation to strict truth does not prevail. In every case of this kind the final good of the social organism would be, theoretically, imperilled by conceding a right which had been truly lost.

The obligation of oaths has created a difficulty for many earnest souls. Our Lord said, " Swear not at all," and this command has been interpreted as rigidly by some as the parallel statement on divorce which will be considered later. Yet the New Testament represents God as " swearing by Himself," and the plain reading of the passage relating to our Lord's trial before the High Priest implies that He accepted an " adjuration " addressed to Him. To the Christian the imperative demand of truth renders an oath quite unnecessary. He speaks the truth, when properly interrogated, as a simple duty. And yet it is desirable to assure others that he has full consciousness of the importance of the words he utters, and is speaking them as one charged with a solemn duty in the sight of Almighty God. The receipt is not necessary when a man of strict honour enters in his ledger the discharge of a debt. But the withholding of this additional safeguard would be in itself a dishonourable action. A readiness to swear too often indicates a loose hold on the idea of the sacredness of truth. A refusal to call God to witness in a solemn circumstance runs counter to the practice revealed in the New Testament (*cf.* Rom. i. 9, ix. 1; 2 Cor. i. 23; Rev. x. 6). At the same time the State in many countries recognises the scruples of some citizens, and is satisfied with a solemn affirmation in lieu of an oath. Ethically there does not seem to be a great difference between the two methods.

C. The Duty of Sympathy

The word " sympathy " comes from two Greek words, and properly signifies a community of feeling. Musical chords that vibrate together are said to be in sympathy. The nearer other beings approach to us in their nervous system, and apparent reactions to pain, the deeper the sympathy which we feel. If a fly could scream loudly

when struck we should hesitate to obey the injunction "Swat that fly!" There is a natural physical base for sympathy, and there is ethical value in kindness to animals considered in itself, apart from the general discipline of such an attitude. But sympathy extends beyond the community in physical organisation and displays itself in a compassion for the suffering and the sinful. The verb is used of our Lord, Who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmity, and of those who had compassion on the bonds of Christ's witnesses. In both cases there is a sense of identity. There is another word used for "compassion" in the Gospels, derived from the term for the inner abdominal regions, and used by the Hebrews as explanatory of kindly feelings. The tender mercies of Jesus Christ are the true standard of this gentleness towards the weak and the erring. Both terms are employed in 1 Pet. iii. 8, where Christians are exhorted to be compassionate or sympathetic, loving as brethren, tender-hearted (from the verb used in the Gospels), humble-minded. It is not too much to say that no virtue is so peculiarly Christian as this capacity for entering into the lot of the unfortunate and the sinning with the practical aim of seeking their deliverance. The Stoics use the word, but not in the sense that we now understand it. It has more the sense of a community of interest or relation, and less the sense of an active participation, for purposes of beneficence, in another's grief or need.

D. The Duty of Forgiveness

Again and again this particular virtue is enforced in the New Testament. It is wanting in pagan Ethics. The "high-minded" man of Aristotle will not speak evil of his enemies unless he wishes to insult them. That marks the height of non-Christian ethical teaching in its Grecian dress. Forgiveness was too often regarded as mere weakness, though human instinct would not suffer it to be banished wholly from the scheme of things. The first duty of a Christian is to forgive. The pattern which is set before him is the forgiveness of Christ, Who reconciled us "when we were enemies." The problem of forgiveness is connected with our relations to others. There are times when an individual offends, not only against another individual, but against principles that involve many persons and

comprise in them many relations. It is for that reason that forgiveness does not always mean the forgoing of the penalty of sin. The judge must sentence the prisoner even when he is compassionate and forgiving towards him. "Justice," says Rogers, "far from being inconsistent with Charity, seems rather to demand that Charity should be consistent with itself, that it should not benefit one section of the community by injuring another" (*Short History of Ethics*, p. 19, n.).

Forgiveness involves readiness to forgo retributive satisfaction and develops an attitude of forbearance towards the wrong-doer. Where penalty has to be exacted, it causes the exactor still to regard the welfare of the transgressor and to mingle mercy with judgment. But forgiveness has its limits, imposed by the transgressor himself. The absence of true repentance makes forgiveness impossible. To pardon freely the rebellious soul would be to inflict irreparable injury upon him by encouraging his sin. The spirit of forgiveness should never be wanting. The desire to forgive should lead us to all lengths in recovering of the sinner. But forgiveness cannot really operate until the wrong-doing is abandoned. This law governs alike the dealings of God with man, and of man with man. It is not really a limit to forgiveness, but the presentation of the unhappy fact that mercy itself can be outraged, and man can refuse the highest boon of God because even the possibility of pardon will not wean him from his evil ways.

E. The Duty of Example and Influence

St. Paul assures us that "no man liveth unto himself." Our Lord taught His disciples that they were "the light of the world." The Christian has a duty of showing an example to all men, and of seeking to influence all in the direction of godliness. The forms that example takes are manifold. Patience under injustice and calumny at length abates even the malice of wicked men. Consideration for a weaker brother regulates the Christian's attitude towards the customs of his day. Even the very regulation of public worship has in it a special regard for the visiting, heathen stranger. The Christian shines by the purity of his conduct. He preserves his generation by the active influence of his words and works. He withstands in the evil day when others

falter and fall. His life contrasts with those around by reason of its essential truthfulness, honesty, peaceableness, cleanness in speech, absence of hatred, presence of gentleness, freedom from sexual impurity, clarity of vision, sanity of deportment (Eph. v.). By these fruits the Christian is known, and in the power of the Holy Ghost he fashions himself after the image of his Lord (1 Pet. i. 14, 15).

CHAPTER XXII

THE CHRISTIAN AND MORAL INSTITUTIONS

IT HAS BEEN SHOWN already that the real power behind the enforcement of law is the public opinion of the community. The responsibility of the individual in this connection raises the question of his duty in assisting the authorities to bring offenders to justice. But there would be no problem if there were no duty. The duty of inculcating a true sense of justice and fair dealing in the community rests on every citizen, and pre-eminently because of his high calling on every Christian. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" has found considerable expansion at the hands of the New Testament writers. We are to be subject to "the powers that be," "not only for wrath but for conscience' sake." "Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." A careful study of the Christian attitude to world dominion would prove a great help to the painstaking student. The following brief notes may offer some guidance:

(i) Obedience to authority is the normal attitude of the Christian (Rom. xiii.).

(ii) "Conscience toward God" offers the only valid exception to this obedience (Acts v. 29).

(iii) Public institutions can be employed with a clear conscience for the furtherance of the kingdom of God (1 Cor. vii. 21).

(iv) Civic right can be claimed by the Christian (Acts xvi. 37, xxv. 11).

(v) The social order must not be violently uprooted even in the interests of a higher principle—*e.g.*, slavery is not directly condemned.

(vi) In any attempt to improve society the main reliance must be placed on the preaching of the kingdom and the superior moral lives of the Christians (Rom. i. 14-16; 1 Cor. x. 23, 24, 33).

It is sometimes argued that the facts recorded in the New Testament are explained by the circumstances of the time. The Christians were in a minority, and could not change

the social order, hence their leaders counselled submission. But at heart this is a charge against the providence of God. It pleased Him to elaborate for us a code of conduct in such conditions, and there is no other of like authority. The Christian is always at warfare, and must ever eschew carnal weapons. The efforts of the Church, when in power, to introduce a different method of prosecuting her work have resulted in the horrors of religious persecution. The New Testament principles are the principles for all time.

So it is manifest that at every stage in the world's progress the Christian is ushered into the privileges and obligations of a complex society. He cannot help sharing in them, and he must discriminate between that which is a condition of social progress and that which hinders true development. The cardinal principle which governs his attitude is that he should not seek his own but another's good. The social order in which he finds himself provides the opportunity for serving God and man.

The Christian ought to be, and in history has been, the buttress of all true moral institutions and the upholder of man's rights. Sometimes impatient reformers have been troubled by the apparent slowness of Christian movements. They have frequently missed the fact that the ground gained has been the result of patient Christian endeavour, and proceed to build upon it hastily without recognition and sometimes without much care.

It may be helpful to mention some of the elements that go to make up our present complex society to which it is impossible for the Christian to be indifferent.

A. The Sacredness of Human Life

At all times the life of man has been hedged round with some safeguards. The obligation to the tribe at an early stage of human progress involved some conception of the duty of preserving the life of one's fellow. It speedily developed into a sense of sacredness which was superior to the law of the ordinary taboo. But it was not until Christianity had enforced the real value of the individual soul that the care of children and the regard for the aged and infirm were established on the present firm basis. Dr. Driver, commenting on Gen. ix. 6, writes: " Man bears in himself God's image; he therefore who destroys a man

does violence to God's image. In other words, every man is a *person*, with a rational soul, the image of God's personality, which must be treated as sacred." The New Testament gives, if possible, an added value to this original determination by reminding us that man, thus constituted, is the subject of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It carries forward the command against slaying man to the inner region of the heart, and forbids us to hate him, adding a high sanction to this attitude, " He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen ?"

B. Freedom

The growth of liberty is one of the most fascinating studies in social history. The Christian is God's free man. The ethical problem associated with freedom lies along the line which divides liberty from licence. Milton has the courage to say: " None can love freedom heartily but good men: the rest love not freedom but licence." The paradox holds that we are never freer than when we recognise the restrictions imposed by sound reason and exemplified in social relations. God's " bond-slave " is the truly free man. He subjects his imperfect will to the will of Him Who is untrammelled, and thereby enlarges his being. The Christian recognises that true freedom consists in release from the bondage of self, the narrowing influences of passion, the specious gratification that flows from immediate sense perception. He moves in the wider sphere of the eternal purpose of God, and by yielding his members as instruments of righteousness enters into the fulness of blessing. What the Christian seeks thus for himself he longs to communicate to others. He truly recognises that " righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people." But what are the limits of lawful restriction in the interests of a wider liberty ?

It is not easy to answer the question that is here proposed, but certain general principles may prove helpful. In the first place, it is impossible to legislate with success beyond the moral consciousness of at least a considerable section of the community. An instance of this may be seen in the fact that while Great Britain more than 100 years ago, through the growing moral sense of her people, abolished

State lotteries, they have been restored in practically every part of the British Commonwealth with the exception of the mother country. The reversal of the prohibition law in the United States serves as another example of the danger of legislation in a moral direction that has not behind it the support of the better elements in the community, in such proportion as will secure at least a moderate observance of the law. This principle may help the student when confronted with the problems that belong to moral development in relation to the Divine revelation.

A further principle has to be recognised. There are regions of moral action that lie beyond the range of human law. The attempt in the Middle Ages to make men corrigible for their private opinions issued in unspeakable tyranny. Lea's *History of the Inquisition* offers abundant evidence of this fact. Opinion can be countered only by opposing opinion, and men are reduced to the weapon of moral suasion in seeking to impose a better moral order.

When these two factors are taken into consideration, the importance of a sound education and active propagandism in the interests of truth and righteousness becomes at once apparent.

C. The Right to hold Property

The underlying ethical principle on which the right of property is based is that man is entitled to the fruit of his labour. To take a very simple illustration, if I use a plot of ground as a cabbage garden, it is obvious that my neighbour cannot build a house upon it, and if I have by dint of my personal exertion made the ground productive, I am entitled to the product or to such reward of my labours as will compensate me for the product. The Christian is not compelled to adopt any particular law of property holding, so long as the essential principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire is maintained. As a result of our modern complex social organism, difficult questions emerge. These are related to problems of socialism in relation to property. Each one of these must be estimated upon its own merits. The Christian has the responsibility of deciding whether, and how far, any particular social development trespasses upon the essential, sacred rights of the individual or the State. Over-hasty determinations must be avoided.

Three elements combine in the constitution of what we call property:—

(i) The *material* which is found in the provision of nature. It needs to be observed that this provision is not equal in every part of the world. A gold mine is more valuable than a quartz quarry, and either of these than a sparsely clad mountain range.

(ii) *Labour*, which cannot be estimated directly on the amount of toil expended, the value of the material considerably affecting the result.

(iii) *Mental Qualities*.—The progress of science and the individual difference in men have made prodigious changes in the possible output of material and the general economic condition of a people or of an individual. Most cut-and-dried schemes ignore one or other of these elements, and students need to be on their guard against indictments of a system which are based on a simplified theory of production.

But the Christian principle in the holding of property, however difficult the problem of ascertaining the ultimate moral right may be, demands that all such property should be held for the service of the community. Any violation of another's right to live, or any diminution of another's powers of service, that can be traced to our direct responsibility is an offence against the Christian law of service, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." The Christian must examine closely the relation between the use of property (in its widest sense) that terminates directly on himself and his needs and gratifications, and the employment of its material resources for the advancement of humanity and the extension of the kingdom of God. He must justify before his Lord the proportion in which he employs it for those varying uses.

D. The Right of entering into a Contract

It is a condition of our modern life that an individual shall be at liberty to enter into a contract with his fellow-man to supply him with material, labour, or the fruits of his intellectual efforts, and this common right belongs equally to the Christian and to all men in our present-day social conditions.

The right of contract can be violated in several ways.

By direct violence, which occurs always in time of war. War means the withdrawal from certain individuals of the privilege and right of exchange and barter, and this withdrawal is enforced by recourse to arms. But the right of contract can be violated indirectly by depriving one individual of the privilege of securing the full benefit of his marketable possession. The Christian has to watch against imposing unjust terms upon his fellow-man. This would be a return to slavery. In order that the fulness of contract may be realised, men must live in a free community, and it should be the aim of every Christian to secure the fullest measure of freedom possible. Questions of a fair weight, working hours, the relation between intelligence and labour, overhead charges and managerial expenses, offer grave problems to the Christian, as indeed they do to every individual in our complex community. But the cardinal ideal of freedom, and the desire for the expansion of the powers of our fellows to the fullest possible capacity, ought to be the ruling principle of conduct.

E. Education

The development of the mental and moral powers of the individual is one of the prime conditions of social and spiritual progress. It is extraordinary how late was this conception in our modern world. In the first ages of Christianity, general knowledge was fairly widely diffused, but Europe very slowly recovered from the barbarian invasions that finally destroyed the Roman Empire. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the condition of the general populace in England in this regard was deplorable in the extreme. Even yet there are relics in certain quarters of the idea that the "lower orders" can appropriate with profit only a very small modicum of education. "They are really better without having strange ideas put into their heads." The Christian cannot make distinctions of this sort. He may recognise that there are difficulties in relation to capacity and future employment that must be considered when regulating the course of instruction of the individual, but he also recognises that difficulties can be transcended in certain cases, and that every man is entitled to the fullest privileges that conditions permit. The Christian should lead the way in true education.

There is no greater fallacy than the oft-repeated statement, "Ignorance is the best friend of religion." An imperative duty presses upon the true servant of God in this connection. Modern theories of religious freedom have resulted in a separation between secular and religious instruction which bodes ill for the latter.

The State undertakes the training of the child in all those elements of knowledge that are necessary to enable him to fulfil the position of a useful citizen. But while the State recognises the duty of inculcating a certain measure of common morality, some would say a measure that is gradually becoming less and less, the State no longer deems it advisable to insist upon any definite relation of education to the spiritual needs of the soul. The theory is that the Church, or the Churches, must undertake this duty. The result is that highly equipped State teachers, with all the resources that make for efficiency, spend most of their time in training our youth in the "secular" sciences, while the deeper foundations of morality, discoverable in the relation between God and the soul, are left to voluntary and often untrained and ill-equipped Sunday-school teachers. It is an imperative duty of every servant of Christ who recognises this danger to seek to remedy it as far as possible. Those who have the gift of teaching, in view of this circumstance, find their obligation to impart the knowledge of God greatly enhanced. Those who have been endowed with material advantages ought to find in this avenue an opportunity for real service of the very highest character.

The New Testament leaves no doubt in the minds of its readers as to the importance of teaching, and particularly teaching the truths of the gospel. Professor König of Germany has drawn attention to the fact that the Jewish people were the best educated in the old world. The reason for this was that every Jewish boy was fired with the ambition of being able to read the sacred Torah for himself. Such was the great importance placed upon the Old Testament revelation by those to whom it was entrusted. Shall it be said that Christians are less mindful of their sacred responsibility, to whom God has spoken in Christ our Lord?

It may be said that all these social rights and values thus briefly indicated are only rightly appreciated and maintained

by those who recognise that all our powers and all our opportunities come to us directly from God.

Five Social Institutions ordained by God

The moral rights and institutions to which attention has been directed are related closely to five social institutions ordained of God. These may be summarised as follows:

(i) The community of sex.
(ii) The community of culture.
(iii) The community of work.
(iv) The community of worship.
(v) The community of the State.

No one of these can be ignored, but each of them derives a new significance when they are related to the governing idea of the call of God. All things are given to us truly to enjoy, and the development of our natural powers and our social instincts can be truly regulated only when we remember that God calls us to these varied exercises, in order that we may glorify Him in our bodies and in our spirits which are His.

It is not necessary to elaborate the dictum of Aristotle that man is a social animal. But we need to remind ourselves that no human institutions which truly serve society can be excluded from our purview when we consider the full service of God. The five social institutions which have been enumerated are in the strictest sense necessary. It is impossible for a man to live in society without each of these features touching his life in some form or at some time. The only one concerning which a question might be raised is that which relates to the community of worship. But if we realise that this involves in its most elementary form the pursuit of some ideal of life and conduct, it will be seen that worship is a necessary constituent of the social order. It is reported that an admirer of John Bright once said to Disraeli, "After all, you must acknowledge that Mr. Bright is a self-made man." "Yes," drily replied the astute statesman, "and he adores his Maker." Mr. Bright's well-known religious convictions possibly relieved the joke from too great a tincture of cynicism. But the self-made man who is not a John Bright

also worships, even if it be at the tawdry shrine of his own self-importance.

In addition to these necessary social institutions there has grown up in our civilisation quite a large number of voluntary organisations, and if the Irish bull will be pardoned, some of the voluntary organisations have become compulsory—for example, trade unions, and certain commercial combines. Theoretically, the State does not require any citizen to enter a voluntary association, although, as we have seen, practical pressure may effect that which the State does not demand. The very word "voluntary" suggests that the Christian is not under obligation to attach himself to any association of that nature. There are many of them to which he would be at once attracted—for example, a large number of organisations devoted to varied aspects of Christian activity. The question which must be answered before the Christian can give his allegiance to any such association is whether in his judgment he can fully honour God and secure a measure of benefit to his neighbour by joining under the banner of any corps of volunteers. Loyalty to Christ must precede loyalty to any organisation, and condition it. The man who loves God knows that those institutions which are necessary, by the very stamp of their necessity, are ordained by God. He must also recognise that the Church of God was originally, and is now in many countries, a purely voluntary association. Although the principle of worship is a necessity of our being, the worship of the true God according to the standards of the Old and New Testament is a subject of revelation, and men are called to it by the Spirit of God uniting their will to His. In relation to those who are without, this presents itself as a purely voluntary action, and the State will recognise the right of an individual to dissociate himself from the Church, however much the Christian may press the moral obligation which is violated by such dissociation.

In these circumstances there is a range of choice in voluntary associations. This choice is determined by varying degrees of moral responsibility, and those organisations which, in his judgment, most fully represent the mind and will of God claim his allegiance with moral imperativeness. Those organisations which are defective in the prosecution of the higher ideals, and nevertheless are useful and productive of good order, cultivating helpful instincts,

make a less imperative, but still a powerful, moral appeal. There are other organisations which are not harmful, and do not conflict with any high principle of obedience to Christ our Lord, and which nevertheless appear as relatively indifferent. In such cases the Christian can determine his choice by the circumstances in which he finds himself, always remembering that though a moral obligation appears slight, there can never be a choice that has no implication. The Christian joins, or does not join, because he sees, or does not see, in the association some opportunity of serving God or his fellow-man. There are other associations which impair Christian testimony. They involve the condoning of that which is in the judgment of the Christian positively wrong. It is scarcely necessary to say that any such conviction must act as a complete deterrent to active participation with others in this particular activity.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CHRISTIAN AND SEX RELATIONS

IT IS GENERALLY felt that in this department of human life one of the sternest battles of the day is being fought. It presents to the Christian one of the most complex problems which must be faced if the world is to receive the benefit of the higher teaching of our Lord. Many things are said today in connection with sex and morality that would have shocked our forefathers. This is not in itself satisfactory evidence that our forefathers were right. Perhaps we ought to shock them. A gentleman was once charged at a public meeting with saying things that would make his father turn in his grave, and he acidly replied that he had no reason to think that a change of posture would be bad for his father. But where modern notions come into conflict with the revealed will of God, or threaten to overthrow the stable foundation of society, they ought not to be accepted simply because they are modern. Young people are fond of exhorting their elders at present to " come out of their period," but it is necessary to guard against the idea that morality is periodic. There are changes which are inevitable and useful, but since the basic facts of human nature abide, the basic laws that govern the exercise of that nature must also abide. There are several positions that remain unalterable, and must be taken into account by every thoughtful person.

(i) The power of sex is a gift of God to the individual, and, like every other gift of God, must be exercised in accordance with His mind and will. There is no power in our being over which we have unlimited individual control. Every power is, from another aspect, a responsibility, and can only be exercised lawfully in relation to the community, and with due regard to the will of our Creator. This is a fact which is frequently ignored. It is particularly important that we should remember it where passion may unduly strengthen individual caprice, and induce men to fling caution and obligation to the winds.

(ii) It is important that the individual should realise that

in community of sex the unit is the family, and not the individual. It seems perfectly obvious that a social institution which involves the consent of two persons cannot be regarded as an instrument simply for the self-gratification of one of the parties. But there is a deeper truth which the Christian recognises, and that is that community of sex affects very materially the future of the family and the race, and such considerations must be operative if we are to exercise God's gift as He Himself enjoins. The original command in Genesis, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth," has not been abrogated by any subsequent enactments, and although it does not by any means exhaust the idea of sex relation and family life, it must be given its due importance if we are to conduct ourselves rightly and wisely in the sight of God.

(iii) As a consequence of this wider responsibility, sex relations outside the bond of marriage, or even before marriage, cannot be condoned from the teaching of the New Testament. One of the difficulties of present-day life is that which arises from those economic conditions which increase the problem for young people through a postponement of the time of marriage. It is just a question whether young people in many instances would not lead happier and healthier lives if they were content to face difficulties in the manner that their fathers did before them. The wish to start in the assured position in which their parents left off seems a playing for safety in the economic sphere that is not peculiarly heroic. Still it must be recognised that, with all the will in the world to face a great adventure with courage and resoluteness, conditions of life often raise insuperable barriers. As a rule nothing is lost by the waiting time, when the waiting is undertaken in the fear of God. The Christian cannot do otherwise than govern his desires in relation to the essentials of the Divine command, and experience proves that the effort of self-control thus demanded creates a stability of character that enables the individual the better to fulfil life's other responsibilities.

(iv) Monogamy. The nineteenth century witnessed a strong philosophical revolt against the principle of monogamy. Schopenhauer, with a strange blindness to the facts of history, had the temerity to say that previous to the enforcement of monogamy there were fewer unhappy women in the world. But the philosophic revolt has not

dislodged the strong conviction of the dominant world races. As a matter of fact, it is confidently asserted by advocates of Islam in England that there is an increased tendency to monogamy amongst Mohammedans, and we know that the Jewish people have quite cheerfully accepted the standard of European countries in this regard. It used to be asserted by students of anthropology that in the early stages of the human race there was unregulated promiscuity in this matter. The more recent students of tribal conditions have abandoned this idea, and are more and more inclined to draw attention to stringent regulations which obtained even amongst primitive peoples. It is not too much to say that experience gives its verdict against polygamy.

There are those who see in the strict legal regulations that govern marriage in civilised countries simply a reflection of the economic order, and who would contend that capitalism lies at the root of monogamy. But it may be urged in reply that the increasing sense of individual responsibility lies behind both developments. It is not necessary to contend that capitalism is free from defect, and may not merge ultimately into a better form of economic order, in order to show that it rises superior to feudalism in giving a wider liberty to a larger body of people. Even feudalism recognised monogamy, but it found avenues of licence that have not yet been wholly closed, in the assumption that the serf had not even in this respect the same rights as his overlord. We may say, then, that the higher sense of the dignity of the individual is the root principle which lies at the foundation of the monogamous order.

An interesting question arises here in relation to the practice of the Old and New Testament. In the New Testament monogamy is set before the community as the highest ideal of marriage, and our Lord's teaching plainly intimates that this is the purpose of God. Nevertheless, in the Old Testament we find throughout the whole history of Israel the practice of polygamy, and this practice is associated with a custom of concubinage in which certain rights of position are denied to some women who have, notwithstanding, a recognised married status. Volumes have been written upon the problem, and it is only possible to indicate here what seems to be the true line of approach.

The acute question concerning divorce in our Lord's

teaching, which falls to be considered later, has obscured from many the penetrating explanation which He offers of the condition above described. Dealing with divorce, He says, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. xix. 8). If we extend this general principle to cover all the relations of marriage, it will be seen that our Lord teaches that, as a consequence of the Fall, the restoration to the original ideal of humanity must inevitably be a slow process in society, analogous to the process of sanctification in the individual who finds himself with an unredeemed body.

If we study the Old Testament in the light of this statement of our Lord, we find that at every stage the process is one of gradual elevation of the idea of marriage. The Mosaic code concerning slavery (for notwithstanding the suggestions urged upon us from many quarters, we believe that the legal code in Israel is essentially Mosaic), when contrasted with the code of Hammurabi, exhibits modifying and humanitarian directions in every instance, including matrimonial relations between master and slave. On every theory of the structure of the Old Testament, the original monogamous relation is contained in the earliest document (Gen. ii. 20-24). Dr. Driver comments, "Marriage —and moreover *monogamic* marriage—is thus explained as the direct consequence of a relation established by the Creator." The same idea which thus emerges in the very earliest literature in Israel is reinforced with strong emphasis in the latest book, that of the prophet Malachi, where divorce is represented as an abomination and a concession due to the hardness of men's hearts. It is not surprising, therefore, that with advancing knowledge the practice of polygamy in Israel gradually decreased, and the Christian ideal was accepted by many devout souls in the old dispensation. The difficulties in modern society of preserving the New Testament conception may help us to understand the patience of God in teaching that which was highest, and bearing with that which was less ideal, until such time as the developed conscience of men, under the light of revelation, could bear the message which has been implanted from the beginning.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE FAMILY

SCARCELY LESS important than the marriage relation is the relation to children, which is regarded both in the Old and New Testament as lying at the foundation of all true social order. The monogamous marriage has its own bearing on this aspect of social life. One of the saddest features in polygamous communities is the frequent rivalries between half-brothers and half-sisters. The Old Testament stresses most emphatically the idea that the gift of children is a blessing from God, and the New Testament enforces the obligation of children to parents, and parents to children, in no uncertain manner.

Three paramount duties are laid upon parents:

(*a*) Provision for their children so far as the opportunity offers. " Parents should lay up for the children."

(*b*) The duty of careful instruction, particularly in the fear and nurture of the Lord. The example is afforded us in 2 Tim. iii. 15, and the injunction in Eph. vi. 4.

(*c*) Patience and forbearance. St. Paul uses the illustration of a nurse cherishing her children as an example to all Christian teachers who had to deal with those who were less perfectly instructed in the way of the Lord.

Children are exhorted to exhibit three parallel virtues:

(*a*) Obedience. While the New Testament emphasises the right of the individual, and modifies as a consequence the absolute control of parents, it insists that reverence and obedience in the Lord is due to those who are responsible for the care and nurture of the young.

(*b*) The obligation to learn and submit to the sound discipline of education is imposed upon children as the duty to teach is imposed upon their natural guides. The Old Testament is emphatic upon the necessity for learning the things of God, and the New Testament does not abate the stringency of this obligation.

(*c*) Closely allied to obedience is the duty of succouring parents. The filial obligation in early life is best fulfilled by lawful obedience. In later years obedience merges into

helpfulness. Our Lord was emphatic that the duty of honouring father and mother contained in it an obligation to provide for their declining years so far as opportunity permitted.

The reciprocal relation between parents and children, carried out in the spirit of the New Testament, offers an example of family unity that is unparalleled in any other ethical code in the world.

It is in relation to the sacredness of the family, and the stability of the social order that depends on it, that the strongest injunctions against sexual licence are found in the New Testament. The union between man and wife is accepted from the beginning as the most sacred of all earthly ties, and it has to be borne in mind that, like many another ethical consideration, it has its physical as well as its moral side. Any act which threatens to dissolve this union, or which exhibits unfaithfulness to its basal principle, weakens at once the stability and the sanctity of the family. The closer the union between individuals, the greater the possibility of pain and the graver the consequences of rupture. While all sins of the flesh are unhesitatingly condemned in the New Testament, the sin of adultery is exposed to special and severe condemnation. The loose attitude of the present day to this particular form of evil is threatening the very foundations of society, and imposing upon Christians the stern obligation to emphasise with increasing power the New Testament presentation. The fact that God has condemned illicit unions, and all individual licence outside the well-defined limits of the marriage bond, should be sufficient for the Christian.

When we come to consider the conditions which operate in the matter of the marriage choice, it is quite clear that the New Testament gives a wide liberty to the individual, a liberty which advancing knowledge has tended to develop rather than restrict. Marriage, if the New Testament ideal is to be fully observed, should be undertaken only where there is a mutual attraction. Marriage should be based on love between the individuals. But we need to be greatly on our guard in determining what is meant by mutual affection. A body of modern novelists have elevated the idea of emotion to a paramount place in determining marriage relations, and have suggested, by implication, that the period of faithfulness should be only co-terminous with the period

of emotional response. As a consequence of this view, the sense of responsibility towards children has been greatly diminished because there is much that is prosaic in the care and nurture of a family. It has been argued that individual mutual satisfaction is the supreme end of the marriage bond, and where this has for any reason ceased, all obligations have been cancelled. But the Christian understands by love something very much higher than a mere passing emotion. Emotion is included in it, but comprehended in a much wider range of responsibility and duty. True love will never violate true obligations, and the sentiment which is in its own nature of tremendous value can nevertheless merge into a still deeper conviction of mutual trust and mutual obligation, so that a habit of faithfulness is created—faithfulness in the discharge of all responsibilities and duties sufficiently powerful to resist the temptation occasioned by a passing emotional revolt. It seems sometimes very remote from the romantic ideas which have clustered round marriage to suggest that it is a contract between two parties. But the true Christian will recognise that, if God has permitted this sacred union, there is, in the very permission, *prima facie* evidence that God intended one person for the other in a lifelong fellowship.

The corrective to the danger of a mere emotional reaction, which involves the individual in irretrievable obligations, is found in a prayerful realisation of the sacredness of the responsibility. The Christian should seek at the hands of God clear guidance. There should be recognition of those elements of mutual sympathy and understanding, some of them found in the region of educational attainment, which give promise of permanent affection that goes deeper than an immediate emotional, and possibly largely physical, attraction. Above all, if the best results are to be achieved, the highest interests must be recognised. It is in this region that the Apostle enjoins Christians to marry in the Lord. When these things are understood, it will be recognised that fidelity in every department of life, and particularly in those intimacies of the married relation, is the true link that binds emotion to the higher principles of rational affection and secures that happiness without which family life becomes disordered.

An acute problem disturbs the thoughtful world at present. What is to be the Christian attitude towards divorce? It

is well known that within Christian circles two conflicting ideas prevail as to the nature of our Lord's teaching upon this important matter. The Roman Catholic Church, and those who have been influenced by the rigid Western theories developed from the fifth to the sixteenth century, maintain that the only possibility for a Christian is separation between husband and wife, and that any liberty of remarriage during the life of the separated partner is entirely taken away. The Eastern Church, on the other hand, has never accepted this particular view, and some Westerners charge the Eastern Church with very great laxity in this regard.

Two questions need to be separated carefully here: the question of the interpretation of the New Testament passages, and the question of the application of the principles that may be deduced from that interpretation.

Interpretation

On the matter of interpretation, a modern school of criticism represents that the unqualified statement in Mark x. 2-12, which finds a parallel in Luke xvi. 18, should be accepted as the actual words of our Lord, and that the qualifying clause which is found twice in St. Matthew (Matt. v. 32 and xix. 9) should be regarded as qualifications introduced by the Evangelist, which find no counterpart in the teaching of our Lord. It will be seen that this involves a very serious assumption. It implies that the Evangelist, having before him a reputable source of our Lord's teaching, deliberately modified the Divine instruction. If this were to be admitted, it would occasion very grave doubt as to the reliability of the Evangelist's records. It is possible to argue from it, as has been done in the new-formed theories, that the earlier source has been adulterated in the interests of homiletics. If we were compelled, by reason of criticism, to adopt this attitude, of course it would be necessary to accept the position, and seek for such grounds of historicity in the recorded sayings of our Lord as were open to us on this admission. But it is not necessary to adopt this view.

It is a habit of our Lord to speak positively, and to avoid qualification, and in many instances we ourselves, quite

properly and almost unconsciously, apply the needed condition. Our Lord said, " Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," yet no interpreter of any school takes these words as giving unconditioned discretion to the individual to remit and retain sins. On the matter of interpretation, there are some wise words in Dr. Salmon's *The Human Element in the Gospels*, which may serve as an illustration of the line which can with confidence be adopted in determining this immediate question. He writes: " This difference has given rise to a difference of practice in the Church, the Roman Church forbidding remarriage, even to the innocent husband of a wife who has committed adultery, a strictness which does not prevail in either the Eastern or the Anglican Church. . . . If notice be taken of another variation between St. Matthew's version (in chapter xix) and St. Mark's, no fair-minded critic can doubt that the limitations in Matthew were made with the express purpose of removing any prohibition against divorcing an adulterous wife. The question with which the Pharisees tempted our Lord is, according to St. Mark's version, *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?* but according to St. Matthew, *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* In fact, the question touches on a dispute which then went on between rival schools of expounders of the Law. . . . The laxer school of rabbis gave the husband unlimited power of divorce, if for any cause his wife found no favour in his eyes; the stricter gave him the power only if he had found *some unseemly thing* in her. But it was agreed on both sides that the wife's adultery would be a sufficient cause for divorce. If, therefore, St. Matthew has correctly reported the question put to our Lord, as to whether a man might put away his wife *for every cause*, the case of adultery was outside the question on which our Lord was asked to give a decision; and it needed no special formula of exclusion to make His answer not applicable to it. Thus it does not appear to me that St. Matthew reports our Lord as having said anything to disallow the remarriage of an innocent divorced person. . . . We are not so much concerned with the words of our Lord, as with the meaning which He desired to convey. And to that meaning we could not have a better guide than the earliest commentator, St. Matthew, who has sufficiently indicated how he understood it, and who has been recognised

by the Church for centuries as an authorised interpreter of our Lord's meaning" (pp. 128-131). Unless we are to hold that there was an unwarrantable interference with our Lord's teaching, it seems inevitable that we should regard the expansion in St. Matthew as a warning to us that, although divorce in all its aspects is abhorrent to the true ideal of morality and a violation of the law of God as that law would obtain were all men His true servants, nevertheless, sinful humanity in this, as in other matters, violates the true spiritual ideal and makes certain reactions inevitable.

It must be borne in mind that there is a difference between that which is lawful and that which is expedient for the Christian, and it may well be that the later device of separation, which was not in contemplation because it was not in operation in the time of our Lord, may, in certain circumstances, offer a door of hope for the erring party, and heal the breach of the marriage relation when true repentance has supervened upon the transgression. But the New Testament as we have it does not represent our Lord as imposing the condition of perpetual separation upon those who have been outraged by a violation of the most sacred obligations that belong to humanity. As a proof that the early Church followed the guidance of St. Matthew, and believed that his expansion had the authority of our Lord, two facts are worthy of note. The Pauline teaching on deliberate desertion, in 1 Cor. vii., gives the Christian brother or sister liberty "in such cases." It is worth noticing that the term which St. Paul uses, which has been translated "depart," had become, in the time in which he wrote, "almost a technical term in connection with divorce" (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*). Further, there is a marked distinction between verse 11, in which the Christian partner separates from her husband, where the injunction is that she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband, and the words that follow the case of the unbeliever departing in verse 15, "A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases." It seems impossible to hold that St. Paul would have used language that at the least is the language of studied ambiguity, if the early tradition regarding our Lord's words made the marriage bond in all cases invincible. The problems of interpretation and the difficulties con-

nected with it are brought out clearly in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, and also in Edwards's *Commentary upon 1st Corinthians*. It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that St. Paul contemplated freedom from the yoke of marriage in certain circumstances, though he argued powerfully against the desirability of such freedom, and emphasised the Christian duty of avoiding by every possible means the situation that led to separation. In considering the meaning of the word translated "in bondage" in verse 15, it is necessary to observe the use of the same word in verse 27 and verse 39, in both of which it has reference to the obligation to observe the binding nature of the marriage contract.

The second consideration is that the pre-Nicene fathers without exception recognise the reading in St. Matthew's Gospel as authoritative. In the exhaustive investigation on the *Ante-Nicene Exegesis of the Gospel* undertaken by Dr. Harold Smith, we find the following summary: "The Fathers, like people generally till quite lately, are inclined to take the First Gospel as the standard; not to regard Mark as the primary source of Matthew. Hence they do not feel the present difficulty of accounting for Matthew's additions to Mark. None of them doubt the genuineness of "except for fornication"; nor do they take it distinctively of pre-nuptial sin. . . . Thus all have no doubt about divorce being lawful for adultery. Origen suggests it may be tolerated even on other grounds" (vol. i, pp. 116, 121).

But in these days while the obligation of correct exegesis rests upon the student, and ought not to be ignored, it is of more importance to emphasise the evident reluctance with which divorce is considered in every passage of the New Testament. It is hardly necessary to say that our Lord's words contemplated a condition of society in which divorce would be excluded through the operation of the higher law of love, and Christian Ethics emphasises the fact over and over again that the individual who keeps close to the Lord will find no difficulty in keeping close to the higher obligations in matters of marriage. There is a laxity at present in our social order that renders the injunction to marry in the Lord of paramount importance. The loosening of the marriage bonds has resulted in a condition that threatens the very fabric of society, and a Christian can view divorce only as a last dread alternative

forced upon the conscience by the unbelief of an unconsecrated partner.

There may be painful instances in which a Christian lapses from the high standard imposed by God. In all such instances the suggestion of the New Testament is that the sinner will be restored in penitence and contrition. Wherever such a possibility offers itself, a second marriage, even though lawful, would not be expedient for the Christian. It is only where there is a complete rupture of the very condition of the marriage relation by an unfaithfulness which is in the nature of a determined course of action, rather than the consequence of some emotional stress in which the individual is brought into the snare of Satan for a time, that the brother or sister is no longer in bondage. Such cases happily are rare amongst servants of the Lord, and prayerful consideration of the responsibilities of married life before entering a solemn contract would serve to make them rarer still. What the Christian has to guard against in this, as in many other matters, is heedlessness in entering upon a state of life fraught with such tremendous consequences to the individual, the family, and the State. The Christian cannot look with favour on the extension of facilities for divorce.

Application of the Principle

This brings us to the second problem, the application of the principle of the New Testament to what may be considered related cases. If it be conceded that our Lord's teaching plainly intimates that in certain circumstances there is a rupture of the marriage bond, the question arises, "Are there parallel examples which might be brought without violence under the general law thus laid down?" Various answers have been given to this question. It has been contended that persistent cruelty is as truly a violation of the marriage code as the act of adultery. Modern jurists in civil life have taken this attitude, and recently in England a Bill was passed (with the silence of the Bishops giving a qualified consent) extending the area of divorce. It is not right to take the easy line that there is one law for the State and another law for the Christian. This may be true in fact, but, where it is true, the Christian must stand in an attitude of complete hostility to the law of

the State. He can neither avail himself of it, nor can he condone the action of others who may be disposed to accept the laxity that runs counter to the commands of Christ.

Two cases, and two cases only, are contemplated within the compass of the New Testament. Roman Catholic divines speak of the Pauline expansion, and try to limit the advice of 1 Cor. vii. to cases of union between believers and unbelievers. According to the view of these authorities, the marriage bond in such instances, and in such instances only, is dissoluble. Marriage between two professed Christians—that is to say, two baptised persons—is indissoluble. It is not possible to limit the language of St. Paul in this fashion. He was dealing, indeed, directly with what have been called mixed marriages, but he lays down the essential principles of the marriage bond, and does so in obedience to the command of the Lord. In the opinion of Alford, he had the passage in St. Matthew directly in mind. We cannot take the line that marriage means one thing to an unbeliever and another thing to a Christian. That is to say, while the unbeliever has frequently a wrong view of marriage, marriage ought to be to him a sacred compact with exactly the same obligations as it possesses for the Christian. If we are to admit, therefore, the Pauline expansion as giving instances of ordinary Christian wedlock, though in the first application he dealt with the acute problem of the relation between the heathen and Christian partner to a marriage, the question is opened whether St. Paul's modification may not be capable of a still wider expansion. On this matter, as has been indicated, moralists differ. Some maintain that where it can be established that an offence, or a persistent series of offences, constitute a moral equivalent to adultery, the law of Christ can be legitimately extended to cover such instances. Others prefer to take the line that the apparent Pauline expansion is an expansion in appearance and not in reality. The divorce of a wife by the unbeliever would probably precede his entering into a similar contract with another wife, and would be in itself evidence of adultery in intent, and most probably in actual fact.

On the whole, while there are many difficulties surrounding the problem which are scarcely appreciated by those who have not given prolonged consideration to the whole question

of our social relations, the modern tendency to laxity needs to be resisted. The Christian is safer who clings closely to the revealed will of God. There is an old proverb that "hard cases make bad laws," and if the lot of the Christian happens to be cast in circumstances that are painful and rack the soul, the effect upon others of the abrogation of his obligations must receive the fullest consideration. The tendency of human nature is to remove barriers against self-indulgence, and in view of this widespread tendency the more rigid observance seems better fitted to secure the full blessing of social order to the community.

The device which has emerged in Christian circles of complete separation without dissolution of the bond of matrimony, while it may offer a door of release in distressing conditions, must be recognised as at best a clumsy expedient. Here, as in cases of war and the punishment of evil-doers by the State, we must realise that practice often comes into conflict with ideals because sin is essentially disruptive. The voice of the Christian may be drowned in the clamour of the multitude, but the example of the Christian in declining to avail himself of an easy way of release from pressing evils will in the end prove a powerful influence in creating those better conditions which will mitigate much of what he deplores.

On this matter it is necessary to recognise that Christian teaching is unique in several aspects. In a work entitled *De Bono Pudicitiæ*, sometimes attributed to Cyprian, the following sentence occurs, "When Christ said a wife was not to be put away except for adultery He gave much honour to chastity" (quoted in Dr. Smyth's *Christian Ethics*, p. 121). We find in the papyri a casual reference as follows, "If it is a boy let it be; if a girl expose it," and find it difficult to recognise that it is the ferment of a new spiritual conception of the relations of life, born of the entrance of Christianity, that makes such expressions sound horrible in the ears of ordinary men and women today.

The Christian teaching develops the latent conception of the Old Testament that our life here is a preparation for a fuller and richer life beyond. It emphasises that the family has its counterpart in the holy union that is displayed within the very Godhead. It teaches that man and woman have an equal status, an independent individuality, and yet that in the purpose of God the close bond of marriage

union is a condition by which their separate individual contributions may be united in a wonderful compensation, so that each supplies that which is lacking to the other, and there is a true development in a deeper unity. Together they are servants of the Most High, working His purpose, and supporting one another in the fulfilment of His will. The Christian family is the centre of all those activities of heart and mind and soul in which the higher purposes of God may be realised. It is the training ground for those wider relations in Church and State which also belong to the Divine plan for the realisation of the Kingdom of God.

Neither in the Old nor in the New Testament is any peculiar sanctity attached to the celibate existence. Paul's language in 1 Cor. vii is sometimes pressed in support of this idea, and he has been accused of holding low views on marriage, but due regard to the circumstances in which he wrote will be sufficient to remove this prejudice from the mind of an impartial reader. He was writing to people who had been emancipated from an excess of licentiousness, and who were in danger of suffering severe persecution. It is surely in place to reason with such that no undue strain should be placed upon desires which previous indulgence had inflamed, and it may be added that the injunction is not wholly out of place in the present time. St. Paul apparently was not married when he wrote to the Corinthians. Some have inferred that he was a member of the Sanhedrin, basing their conclusion on Acts xxvi. 10, where he represents himself as casting a vote against Stephen. If this were established it would mean that St. Paul had been married. But Paul's age at the time, and the possibility that he was unknown except to a small circle in Jerusalem, has seemed to some to make it impossible to regard him as a member of the aristocratic body that controlled the destinies of the Jews. Some have therefore contended that the vote to which St. Paul refers was a popular expression of opinion, confirming the action of the authorities. There is not sufficient evidence in the New Testament to establish the fact either way. It is certain, however, that Paul's reference to himself (1 Cor. vii. 7) is a declaration that he was free from the torture of unrealised desire, and the context makes this abundantly clear. It cannot, therefore, be taken as a suggestion that he wished that everybody should remain unmarried, and it

is altogether foreign to the Jewish idea of the sanctity of the marriage state to press into his words the further meaning that marriage was merely a haven for the tempted.

The Rev. Canon S. C. Carpenter, Dean of Exeter, in an interesting article contributed to the official Journal of the Alliance of Honour, has the following pertinent observations on the interpretation of the passage: " People say that St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians, has not a very high view about sex. He says, for example, ' It is better to marry than to burn '—as if marriage were to be thought of as simply a preventive against immorality; a low view of marriage. What can be said about that? Two or three things quite worth saying. When in the seventh chapter of that letter, verse 7, the Apostle says, ' I would that all men were even as myself,' it is commonly assumed that he means, ' I would that all men were unmarried.' I am quite sure that he means: ' I would that all men were as I am, independent of the necessity of thinking about considerations of that kind. I would that all men were free and independent—not independent from actual marriage, but independent from the necessity of thinking in those terms.' Further, it is only quite a small part of what the Apostle has to say about the whole subject; and it is qualified all the way through by being a sort of *pro tem.* advice given in a time of crisis : ' This I say because of the present necessity,' and so on. If you want to know the whole of what St. Paul has to say about Christian marriage, turn to the fifth chapter of his Letter to the Ephesians, and there you find a very much fuller and very much nobler doctrine of the whole subject."

The Christian must resist, in the light of New Testament teaching, every attempt to disorganise the family. In the same magazine to which we have referred, the Master of Selwyn, Cambridge, the Rev. G. E. Newsom, warns us: " In the argument which has been advanced in these post-war years—there is a certain amount of sex mania about, which shows itself in popular literature—the moral tie between sex and parenthood is regarded as an offence against the sacred cause of freedom. It has been said to be unnatural that the instinct of sex should be subordinated to family and to parenthood, and that the devices for avoiding parenthood have given opportunity for the life of sex to go on entirely on its own, entirely dissociated from

the joys and responsibilities of parenthood and family: all this in the great name of freedom!" The ethical answer to all such arguments is that no function can be employed apart from the responsibilities which attach to it without moral deterioration. It would be a mistake to regard marriage solely from the point of view of parenthood. There are other elements of tremendous importance, and therefore the Christian has to exercise control even within the bounds of marriage in the interests of the higher issues which open before him. But it is quite another matter to argue that there can be a deliberate avoidance of responsibility directly associated with the powers which God has given us, and at the same time a full development of the moral order.

The failure to fulfil duty, both towards God, Who has given us our sex capacity, and towards the future of the race which depends upon the judicious exercise of such a gift, must have far-reaching effects in narrowing the outlook of the individual, in creating a spirit of selfish indulgence and a sense of irresponsibility towards the great problems of life. There are occasions when the normal exercise of the sex function, which is the natural condition of the vast majority of mankind, is denied to certain individuals. There may be failure to find that suitable partner that alone seems to justify the exercise of this great power, or there may be economic responsibilities that make a first demand and compel a period of waiting, or the total exclusion of the idea of a happy marriage. In all such cases the Christian will recognise that denial is part of God's purpose, and will remember that by a remarkable provision of nature, which is another name for the voice of God, these powers alone can remain unexercised without detriment to the well-being of the individual, a hint that there is a capacity for control which involves disuse. To suggest that our powers can be used without any regard to their normal purpose is to encourage irresponsibility, which, taking possession of one avenue of our being, rapidly overgrows the whole area of our life. There are problems, it may be admitted, connected with physical dangers that are sometimes discovered after the marriage contract has been entered into, but here, as in other departments of life, casuistry must be avoided. Because, in certain clearly defined circumstances, the original laws of our being require modification, it is a mistake to

seek to discover in these exceptional instances a standard for everyday life. Self-control, in the sense that we have developed it, or else the normal use of our normal powers, is the path clearly indicated in the New Testament, and reinforced at present by the earnest appeals of many who do not regard themselves as bound by the standard of Christian Ethics.

It is not without significance that our Lord's ministry opened with a wedding feast, and also that the young maiden who was chosen to be the instrument of the Incarnation was espoused to Joseph. Even in the miracle of the Virgin Birth, if it may be so expressed, care was taken not to depreciate the sanctity of the married state. Afterwards Mary lived a happily married woman, and the modern extravagances, which suggest that her marriage was merely nominal, find no countenance in the New Testament records.

There is danger at the present time that the rights of women should be so pressed as to suggest that she is not only man's equal, but possessed of identical powers in every respect. She is often made the rival rather than the complement of man. The teaching of the Old and New Testaments warns us again and again of the diversity between man and woman. It is this fact that makes their union a factor in fulfilling the highest development of each. The union finds its highest peak in spiritual development, and it is the glory of Christian Ethics to represent those who are united in the bonds of holy matrimony as joint heirs of the grace of life. Children of such a union are the subject of the special favour of God: "I will pour My spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring."

CHAPTER XXV

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE ECONOMIC ORDER

IT IS A MATTER of very great importance that some conception of our relation to the economic order in which we live should be formed in our minds. When we study the Old and New Testaments, we discover that it is not the plan of God to interfere unduly, if the expression may be pardoned, with the natural development of mankind. A study of the standards of Jewish law in relation to prevalent conceptions of the period forces upon us the conviction that the distinctive feature in the Jewish code is the infusion of a new sense of responsibility towards God, which gradually effected changes in the moral outlook of the people. Existing institutions are adopted into the code, and nothing in the nature of a violent revolution is traceable. Bearing this fact in mind, the Christian today is confronted with complex problems, having their roots in the far past, and manifesting new and extraordinary developments at every stage of the world's history.

The problem of labour has been rendered immensely complex by modern co-ordinations which mingle the man and the machine in very strange proportions. Combines are the order of the day: combinations of labour to preserve real or imagined rights; combinations of capital to resist real or fancied aggression. International relations share in this economic complexity, and through it all the demand still presses upon the Christian that he should glorify God.

In order that the difficulty of some of the questions may be manifest to us, we need only to consider that in the modern social order we have the intermingling of at least four factors.

(i) There is *the soil* with its varying degrees of productiveness and, as a consequence, varying economic value.

(ii) We must also take into account *the tools* now employed for productive purposes. These tools are no longer primitive instruments, they are the product of years of scientific research and minute adjustment to the needs of the situation. The modern reaper, binder, and packer has taken the place

of the old-fashioned scythe wielded by the single labourer. As a consequence of this, large bodies of men are employed in tool-making who may never have seen a blade of wheat growing. Behind them are the labourers in the vast blast furnaces, and behind them the scientific investigators, patiently labouring in the laboratories towards the further perfection of the tools that the workman uses. We are bound together in the bundle of life, but the bond is so all-embracing that one section of the bundle is scarcely conscious of the needs and perplexities of the other. It is for this reason that hasty generalities are to be deprecated. Those who talk about a reform in modern economic conditions only too frequently ignore the far-reaching character of the conditions themselves.

(iii) It is only an extension of the idea of the development of the tool to consider *the condition of the workers*, the third and most important element in our economic order. Workers cannot be regarded as standing in the same category as productive nature or efficient tools. They are persons with moral responsibilities and make more demands on the consideration of their fellow-men. Any economic system, therefore, that cramps the natural development of the human soul is so far imperfect. And yet in the complexity of our modern social life it seems impossible at present to visualise equal opportunities for all men. The Christian should make it his aim, so far as his powers carry him, to bring to all men the knowledge of the higher life which he himself possesses. No doubt circumstances operate powerfully in individual lives, but it is a mistake to imagine that circumstances in themselves constituted have power to hinder true spiritual development. St. Paul is our guide in these matters. Again and again he emphasises the great truth that God can be glorified even in untoward circumstances. If all men sought the glory of God, the natural soul expansion would burst those bands that at present hinder development, and social order would more closely approximate to the Divine ideal. Wherever there is manifest injustice, there the Christian must stand aloof from any act of condonation. Wherever there is opportunity for the bettering of social conditions, there the Christian must be foremost in furthering the improvement.

(iv) The last element in our complex fabric to which

reference will be made is *the produced material*. The demands of advancing civilisation have increased the number and variety of goods that are deemed essential for the needs of mankind. The close relation of nation to nation, consequent upon the improved means of transport, has greatly enlarged the range even of foodstuffs, and a similar expansion is discernible in every department of life. The problem of luxury goods becomes sometimes acute. Side by side with these elemental factors we have to place the problems associated with their arrangement. Just because of the complexity, human brains occupy a very large part in this arrangement, and leaders of commerce naturally forge ahead, using the vast network of relations for their own advantage. This does not mean that all such employment of the resources at the disposal of the individual is unethical, but it opens the door to very grave abuses. Nowhere has original sin shown itself so markedly as in the economic order. Man's natural relations have been overturned, and the whole race brought into close relation with the principles of evil. Individual greed and avarice become multiplied on a large scale when, in the exercise of these vicious capacities, vast numbers of human beings are pressed unwillingly into service. It is not the economic order *per se* that is wrong, it is the individuals who employ it, and so we are brought back again to the New Testament message: " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The first question that we have to ask is, " What is the purpose of the economic order?" The true answer, which serves an ethical end, is that it is devised to serve human needs. It has grown with the growth of humanity, and developed in accordance with the developing needs of the race. But the Christian recognises that the deepest need of man is spiritual, and he cannot acquiesce in any economic purpose that ignores completely this need, or pursues lower aims to the spiritual detriment of his fellows. This is a greater thing than the lesser obligation, which must nevertheless be recognised as an obligation, that there can be no true fulfilment of an ethical purpose in any phase of the economic order that works directly to the detriment of the material, or social, well-being of humanity, or of any section of humanity. To keep before one's mind the Pauline aim, " Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do,

do all to the glory of God," is the first condition of advancement, even in relation to the material needs of life.

There are certain principles either definitely laid down, or tacitly accepted, in the New Testament, and no Christian can ignore the significance of these.

The Obligation to Work

It is immediately obvious that *the obligation to work* is both an Old, and New Testament requirement. The fact that it is embedded in every rational order does not make this obligation any the less a Christian duty. The idea underlying the responsibility to work is set before us in the parable of the talents. It is our duty to place our gifts at the disposal of God, and to exercise them for the benefit of our fellow-man. Work involves reward as a consequence, and it is a Biblical principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire. These two factors must be combined in any economic order that takes as its base New Testament morality.

A more difficult problem in this connection is what is known as the right to work. It is contended that every citizen should be placed in a position in which his capacity for labour can be, and ought to be, utilised in the general benefit, and particularly for the maintenance of a special standard of living. It is certainly the duty of every State to make this ideal as far as possible practicable. But we must not conceal from ourselves that here artificial conditions may hinder the realisation of the ideal. The very complexity of modern civilisation involves at times periods of general suffering. They are known by the significant title of "depressions." It is the duty of the Christian to strive by every means in his power to make conditions tolerable for all men, and there is an ethical duty in avoiding recklessness of speculation that might engender depression as a consequence.

It must, however, be recognised that the law of exchange, seeing that it is international, is dependent upon conditions that are not wholly within the control of the individual or even of the State. Here again the paramount obligation of spreading the ideals of the Kingdom of God amongst men derives an additional stimulus, owing to the fact that, in consequence of the non-universality of these principles, the

economic order in every country is likely to be seriously affected. The right to work might be conceded, and yet in certain circumstances it might be impossible, through the concession of this abstract right, to secure a certain standard for every member of the community. It is the duty of the Christian to aim at such a condition of life as shall inflict hardship upon no man, but it must be seriously acknowledged that so complex is the problem that sometimes that particular and desirable result seems unattainable. There will never be a condition in which charity—in its narrow and improper sense—is entirely removed from operation. The words of our Lord are too painfully fulfilled in every stage of human experience: "The poor ye have always with you." This does not justify any earnest soul from condoning inequalities that can be removed, but it prevents the acceptance of Utopian theories as absolute guides to ethical conduct. It enforces the golden rule, that work has as its ultimate goal to give to him that needeth.

The Right of holding Property

The second foundation ethical principle is *the right of holding property*. Both the Old and New Testaments recognise this as a fundamental law of human social order. The proprietor of the vineyard asks: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" No doubt it would be inadvisable to press the language of a parable as offering clear indication of a fundamental moral principle; it might belong to the incident of the story, and not be related to the point of the moral. But the recognition of property is fundamental throughout the whole of the Bible. Slaves are warned against purloining. The man who plants a vineyard eats the fruit thereof, and the man who feeds a flock drinks of the milk of the flock. Incidental references of this kind show how widely accepted is the right of holding property. It follows as a natural consequence of the obligation to work, this being enforced upon the man by moral considerations. He cannot be refused the proper reward of his labour, and such reward is the essence of property. But the Christian is not under obligation as a consequence to admit as of paramount necessity every regulation regarding property-holding that has been developed in the course of civilisation. While the funda-

mental principle may, and must, remain, the particular forms which it takes are determined by the needs of society and the conventions by which men are bound together in amity. The so-called socialisation of certain elements of property, by which the right of individual ownership is superseded by State control, is a matter of debate, and not a matter of primary Ethics. The State holding property in trust for its people is only an extension of the present system of combination in our intricate economic system. Whether such a method of solving social difficulties is tenable, or not, is a matter for the economists.

It is the duty of the Christian to support every movement that helps towards the realisation of better conditions, but it is also his duty to be quite satisfied in his own mind that any proposed socialistic expedients ring true to experience, and would prove effective, before he submits his judgment to the direction of those who advocate these new principles. Still, there is no fundamental ethical law which determines the exact measure of property holding by the State and property holding by the individual. It is not sufficiently recognised that even in socialistic schemes the fundamental principle abides. At least the clothes on a man's back can pretty safely be said to be his own. But the Christian recognises that the claim, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" has in it certain obvious qualifications. In our modern system, property is held on trust from the State, which defends it in its own, as well as in the owner's, interest. The Christian is under obligation to submit to every wise rule that has been proved to be for the benefit of the community. Further, as a servant of God, he holds every possession, including natural gifts which are inalienable, in trust for God. If this high ideal animates the individual, it will certainly produce its effect on the body politic.

Three important considerations arise in relation to our present economic order, which may serve as an indication of some of the questions which are presented by the fact that we live in a world constituted by law, under a system which is only slightly of our own devising. The present property in land grants to the individual certain rights in the mineral wealth of the soil. These rights are not absolute, inasmuch as the State can, and sometimes does, require that the mineral wealth of a particular area shall be devel-

oped in the interests of the community. But in order to stimulate private endeavour, and avoid as far as possible this forcible alienation, or partial alienation, of what is conceded as individual property from the proprietor, a system of royalties has been devised. The owner of mineral properties is thereby stimulated to exploit the mineral wealth in the interests of the community, by the granting of what is tantamount to rent. In our present system this particular system has worked on the whole well, but has led in certain instances to the disproportionate enrichment of a small body of people. The Christian is under obligation to recognise the social order in which he finds himself until that order is changed for a more perfect one. Hence if he finds himself in possession of mineral wealth, he finds himself in possession of the right to royalties. He can only use this new-found power as a trust from God, and if it should happen that enormous wealth accrues to him by what may be called the accident of soil, he is under a moral obligation to utilise this increased personal capital for the benefit of the entire community. Had this obligation been universally acknowledged, much of the difficulties surrounding the problem of royalties and mineral wealth would have been removed. No man is at liberty to withhold from the community that which is of service to it: a man is therefore not at liberty to use the surface of a coal seam and to deny mining rights. Each man should look not "on his own things, but on the things of others." Unused property is unused opportunity, and is a sin. Our Lord warns us, "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have." Neglect of powers placed in our hands by Providence, in this case working through the social order, inevitably leads to the withdrawal of the neglected powers.

A further question arises in relation to interest, and what is mistakenly called, in income tax returns, "unearned income." This is related in the first case to the problem of surplus. If parents are to lay up for children, as is commanded in the New Testament, this must mean that theoretically faithful work supplies something over and above the immediate individual need. Mr. Lecky points out that if a man buys a heifer in calf, and things go well with his purchase, in due time he must have a surplus. He has two cows instead of one, and, if the calf were not of

more value than the amount expended on its keep, every calf would be slain for food. These simple illustrations show the futility of denying that labour may produce more than is necessary for the individual or for the family. If one man is satisfied with a simple mode of life, and his labour is equal to another who demands more amusement and more luxuries, the first man, by his frugality and self-denial, acquires a surplus. When this attains particular dimensions our income tax authorities describe it as unearned, which is of course an economic fallacy, though it is a convenient mode of distinguishing between the results of the individual's immediate toil and the surplus which may have come to him through the toil of others.

It is the duty of the Christian to use the surplus, however attained, for the benefit of his fellow-man, and to decide whether the best method in which it can be used in existing circumstances is to place it at the disposal of those who can employ it for the further extension of work. Hence there has arisen the habit of lending money at a fixed rate of interest. The mediæval moralists condemned this under the heading of usury. It would be easy to show that their error arose from an altogether untenable distinction between money, which is only a counter representing wealth, and material possessions. Mr. Lecky's illustration of the heifer in calf may serve to point this moral. It cannot be denied that the mere hoarding of surplus wealth would inflict grave injury on the community, and yet sometimes the evil results of interest-bearing deposits have shocked earnest-minded men.

In this, as in many other matters, the problem is complicated by the difficulties of interrelation. If the individual expends his surplus in extension of his own wealth-producing capacities, employing more labour, increasing his flocks and herds, a simple situation is created. Yet even here there are problems that await solution. Is the individual, for example, justified, if he can afford it, in paying a much higher rate of wages than that which is current in the community? Would he not be creating discontent on a wide scale, and upsetting the balance of society? It will be seen that the relation of man to man operates even in the simple case under review. But the individual may not be able for lack of skill, or because of the small nature of the surplus in his possession, to engage labour and extend

the area of work directly. In such cases he solves the difficulty by combining with others. He places his surplus at the disposal of a firm or the Government, and receives, in lieu of his prospects of gain in the world's mart generally, a predetermined annual amount called interest. There is nothing ethically wrong *per se* in this undertaking. The investor has come to an agreement, fixed with his neighbour, as to the exact amount of benefit that would reasonably be his. He has been the means of offering opportunity for work and extending the productiveness of the community, and this is a labour which is worthy of its hire.

But the Christian is confronted with two temptations which must steadily be resisted. He is not at liberty to become a sleeping partner in any enterprise which, in his moral judgment, directly affects the material, social or moral well-being of the community. Many Christians have felt that direct relation to the production of alcohol comes under this category. All Christians would feel that any profit-bearing system that encouraged directly the violation of the expressed law of God must lie outside the scope of their co-operation. The second difficulty is to determine the ethical limits of speculation. In every work in life there is an element of chance. To refer to Mr. Lecky again, the calf might die, or the cow and the calf might die, and as a consequence loss would accrue to the investor. But the whole process of life has been conditioned by a rational effort to eliminate chance as far as possible. Our huge insurance schemes are standing monuments to this particular phase of social development. The Christian is not at liberty to hazard his resources in the hope of making an immediate and startling gain. The problem is simplified for the individual by the fact that the general rate of safe interest is pretty well fixed by the general law of exchange. But there is danger that a traffic in shares should be undertaken with the sole object of increasing personal wealth, and that the graver questions of moral value should be subordinated to this interest. The line between legitimate speculation and unlawful hazard is not easily drawn, but there is one cardinal rule which has frequently been ignored. Every transaction should be genuine—that is to say, shares should be definitely purchased, and the habit of paying a small deposit (to cover the possible fluctuation in the market) discouraged. There is a widespread system

of gambling on the rise and fall of the market which has in it all the inherent evils that attach to seeking gain by games of chance, and no Christian can engage in practices of this sort. It is the duty of the Christian in all such matters cheerfully to accept such regulations as are made for the avoidance of rash speculation. He ought to be in moral advance of the law of the land, certainly he should not lag behind it.

The Christian and the Capitalist System

It is sometimes urged that no Christian can support the existing system, which emerged from feudalism and is known as capitalism. The title, as we have seen in a previous discussion, is not very well chosen. Capital really means that reserve of wealth which has been accumulated through labour when the immediate necessities of life have been satisfied, and on this definition every system has in it some element of capitalism.

A study of the New Testament leads to the conclusion that a Christian attitude is compatible with varying orders of society, and that it is possible to use the capitalist system for the glory of God. If it were not so, Christianity would have perished through revolt against established institutions in the early stages of human development, a revolt which would have no prospect of success. Christians must be on their guard against identifying social obligations with particular schemes of social improvement. They have the same liberty which belongs to every citizen of advocating reforms that in their judgment would produce beneficial results, but they are not at liberty to suggest that those who are insensible to the value of their proposals are violating their duty to God and man. At most they can but assert that their opponents have not perfectly grasped the full implicates of this duty, and that must remain a matter of discussion. Every system that has as yet been devised in the economic world has been productive of evil. It is the duty of the Christian to avoid accentuating evil tendencies. Capitalism represents the present social order. Economists maintain that even the Bolshevik experiment is only another form of capitalism.

The Christian attitude should be one of using his present social conditions for the benefit of his neighbour. With

singular appreciation of the evils in life, Agur prayed: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain" (Prov. xxx. 8, 9). The Christian therefore will be on his guard against the haste to get rich, and will be foremost in all efforts to reduce the incidence of poverty. He will use the system under which his lot is cast with full consciousness of the dangers which an unconsidered employment of it may create. But no Christian is compelled to withdraw himself from any current policy simply because there are possible evils contained in it. The sanity of the New Testament in ordering men to use existing conditions, while seeking by every means to mitigate the unlovely features, should be the guide of his life.

The Christian and the Search for a Better Order

There is a continual search going on for a better order of life, and it is the duty of those who serve the Lord to be pioneers in this search. It is sometimes said, 'Better a rail at the top of a cliff, than an ambulance below,' and there is a great deal of truth in the motto. But in this world of ours the ambulance is still necessary, notwithstanding the precautions that have been taken to avoid risk, and the Christian, while seeking a better order, must also continually minister to those who are victims in any form of our present system of economics.

It is sometimes regarded as a justification for accumulating wealth that the gains that accrue can be utilised for beneficent purposes. The possibility of such a use must ever be before the mind of the individual, but it is not sufficient. In addition to the possibility of resultant good, there must be a justification of the method of acquiring it. In this, as in every other case, the end only justifies the means when the means are in moral accord with the end. It is not right to accumulate wealth unjustly with the object of spending it, or a large proportion of it, for the benefit of others. The highwayman who robbed from the rich to give to the poor does not offer an example that a Christian can safely follow. If he had laboured, working with his hands to give to the poor, though he might have had less to give in material wealth, he would have contributed more largely

to the moral uplift of society. The true solution of social perplexities lies along the line of entire submission to the will of God. When a man's heart is set upon righteousness through the guidance of the Holy Ghost, he avoids instinctively pitfalls that entrap the unwary. He is further given a vision of the possibility of reconstruction that very often makes him a pioneer on the advancing road to the true Eldorado which is based not on " meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

It has ever been the way, and will ever be the way, that those who live close to God are burdened with some sense of deficiency in prevalent conditions, and set themselves to providing a remedy. But the Christian must remember that mere intuition is not enough. Genius has been described as an infinite capacity for taking pains. There is, however, no more pitiable exhibition than that of the enthusiastic soul, full of ideas but lacking in knowledge, because enthusiasm has not been balanced with patient, prayerful study of the actual situations in life. It is for this reason that sometimes the mere worldling achieves results that put the Christian to shame. He has taken trouble.

The task which lies before the future generations is the task of raising Christian leaders who will keep clear of unnecessary political and economic entanglements, but with adequate knowledge will steadily point men to the higher ideal that can be realised only in and through that web of relations which binds us happily one to another in the great purpose of God.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE STATE

THERE IS MUCH IN POLITICS that distresses men of goodwill. It is often said in haste that it is impossible to touch politics without being defiled. When such suggestions occur to the mind, it is perhaps well to remind ourselves of the old proverb: "Every country has the government which it deserves." If Christians had been more faithful in abiding by their ethical principles, and more earnest in witnessing for God, politics would be different because the people would be different.

When we look at the New Testament we discover that it places a very high premium upon civil government. Both in the Old and the New Testament, followers of the Old Covenant and also Christians found existing civil institutions irksome. In both instances the leaders appointed by God counselled patience, and such obedience as could be given consistently with the maintenance of essential moral and religious principles. Jeremiah exhorts the exiles in Babylon to pray for the peace of the State wherein they dwelt, and St. Paul reminds the Romans who were living "where Satan's seat is," that the powers that be are ordained of God. No doubt the principle has been exaggerated, and the exaggeration has given rise to the satirical phrase "The divine right of kings to govern wrongly." But the Christian is under obligation to come to terms with the strong language of Scripture concerning civil authority, and to incorporate it into his ethical system. Rulers are God's ministers. No doubt a minister may be unfaithful to his charge, but until unfaithfulness is clearly proved, a minister must be regarded as exercising Divine authority in the sphere of our natural life. The State is a divinely appointed institution for the expression of the reason of man. The order which emerges is God-given, because it is the development of a gift essential to human nature, the capacity for social organisation.

As in every other case, either of physical or mental power, the authority resident in the State may be put to wrong uses.

As the individual finds a law in his members working against the law of his mind, and as the State is the aggregate of individuals, expressing a common purpose which can often only be reached by compromise, we would expect that the same evil influence which manifests itself in the private judgment of individuals would display itself in State legislation. Plato hoped for the day when philosophers would be kings. The Christian looks forward to the great ideal of a perfected humanity, a social organisation exhibiting the characteristics that reside in beings who themselves are perfectly balanced, and adding the feature which is peculiar even to the imperfect State, of opening up an avenue for the expression of the interrelation between man and man.

I. Types of State

Social organisation has always been a feature of humanity. Its primal form is in the family, and it is not too much to say that rightly constituted families would supply all the necessary ingredients for the highest development of State life. The needs of individuals create a further development. Certain arts and trades become more and more specialised, and demand as a consequence more and more attention, so that some system of compensation has to be introduced. The worker devotes himself to his particular aptitude on condition that others, similarly circumstanced, supply those needs which his concentration does not offer him the opportunity of satisfying by direct personal activity. Relations of this kind demand some common standard of exchange, and we may find in this the germ of State justice. One of the problems in a socialistic order is to appraise the value of differing capacities. The familiar illustration of the primitive community that found itself in a difficulty over placing a cornet player may offer a concrete instance. How many notes of music, even if they are perfectly rendered, would be equivalent to the labour of making a loaf? How long should the patient community suffer discord while the cornet player is becoming proficient? But the important point to be observed is that increasing complexity of relations demands some form of administrative justice to settle quite reasonable differences of judgment, according to some generally accepted standard.

The ancient world could find no solution except in some

form of the strong man so greatly eulogised by Carlyle. On occasions there was a revolt against any kind of individual dictatorship, and on the whole we find a greater freedom of administration along this direction in the Greek ideal than in any other. But the ancient world followed Plato in being profoundly distrustful of the unregulated voice of the populace. Aristotle complains also that the claim in the Greek States to an absolute equality amongst all citizens made the commons superior even to the laws. The difficulty of democracy was thus felt at an early time, and the solution most generally offered by thoughtful philosophers was a solution of selection. The middle classes were to be given a certain measure of power; the poor were to be excluded; a small coterie were to be carefully educated for State offices, and from these it was hoped there would emerge a wise ruler who would hold the entire system together. The danger was clearly recognised that such a ruler, in the absence of careful training, might become a tyrant, the very worst type of man. The tendency towards democratic government has grown with the conception of increasing toleration, and yet modern times have witnessed a very dramatic revolt against this principle. True democracy can only be realised, without its attendant evils of internal divisions which produce anarchy, when the individual is truly educated. We come here to one of the acute problems of our modern State, the question whether religion can be excluded from the curriculum of a sound education.

God is the supreme Governor of the earth, and it would seem obvious that a people who are unaware of their responsibilities to Him cannot, in the nature of things, exhibit that form of government which shall produce a true harmony with the purpose that manifests itself throughout the world. Increasing education makes it impossible for kings or governors to issue demands for unquestioning obedience. The higher the civilisation and education of the community, the more necessary it becomes to give careful explanations as to the grounds of legal provisions. But the demagogue is the enemy of the sound reasoner, and it is the conflict between rational order and emotional extravagances that awaits solution in the modern State.

It is not possible to say that one ideal form of government has as yet emerged, and consequently it is the duty of the Christian to accept the conditions that prevail in his

country, hoping always to infuse into them the spirit of his Master. We have not passed much, if at all, beyond the principle which governed the attitude of the Church about A.D. 170. As Sir William Ramsay succinctly expresses it, "Any law of the Empire which conflicted with the principles of the Church must give way. All laws of the Empire which were not in conflict with the religion of the Church were to be obeyed" (*The Church and the Roman Empire*, p. 363).

II. The Christian's Relation to the State

There are some who maintain that the State is inherently evil, and that it is the duty of the Christian to hold himself aloof from all active participation in political matters. Their attitude is something like that of the Scottish Presbytery that arraigned Simpson before them for his use of chloroform. They contended that pain was a discipline appointed by God, and that it is our duty to submit to it, not to alleviate it. It is reported that Simpson replied that in the first surgical operation recorded in the Bible, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. It is a question whether the learned physician had not been studying the Book of Proverbs previous to his appearance before his accusers.

The objection can attain validity only by a narrow interpretation of the words "political matters." It is impossible for a Christian to live and not to avail himself of much of the political machinery of the State. When responsibility is thrust upon the individual, he is bound to discharge that responsibility in the sight of God. A simple attitude of passivity is not always possible. When we study the New Testament, we discover that State regulations were actively employed for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Paul used his Roman citizenship. He appeared before the courts of justice both of the Jewish and Roman order, and defended his position against heathen adjudicators. True, he exhorted Christians to avoid the courts of his day for the determination of personal and petty grievances, and every Christian recognises that, where mere individual rights are concerned, the avoidance of litigation as far as possible still remains a Christian duty. But the strong language of St. Paul, in which he speaks of the State officer

as the minister of God to Christians, plainly indicates that he regarded civil authority as a Divine institution.

If, then, the Christian is entrusted with some share in the government of his country, he cannot excuse himself from discharging it. The exact measure of his voluntary participation in political matters must be decided on the same lines as determine his choice of any vocation in life. A Christian is not bound to become a Member of Parliament, but some Christians may feel a call of God to undertake this service, and it can be, in such cases, as genuine a call as to become a chemist or a stonemason. Lord Shaftesbury found himself in a position of political power in England, and his exercise of that sacred responsibility has brought blessings to countless thousands.

III. The Christian and Obedience to the State

One governing principle stands out clearly in the New Testament. The law of God must be supreme. St. Peter enunciated this quite definitely before the Jewish leaders when arrested in Jerusalem, and it has been the guiding star of all servants of Christ ever since. Sometimes the sense of duty towards God may be mistaken. A Christian may feel compelled to resist a measure which, on the last analysis, is not hostile to the demands of his Lord. While such a mistake can be, and has been, made, no Christian firmly convinced of his duty in this regard can afford to abandon it. Mistakes of this kind have been repeatedly remedied, and although the final judgment has been against the action of the individual, *per se*, the general result has always been a progress towards righteousness in the State.

If a disputed example may be permitted, many Christians are convinced that our Lord's words, " Swear not at all," do not preclude the taking of a solemn oath in a court of justice. Conscientious souls have taken the opposite view, and have suffered much in times past for their conviction. The solution that is now presented in our country of permitting a solemn affirmation has widened the bounds of toleration, and has not in any sense impeded the course of justice. The Christian, then, can have confidence in abiding steadfastly by that which he believes to be the very law of God, provided always that he carefully avoids prejudice and that peculiar mania for the limelight which

sometimes attacks fervent people, and has prayerfully and thoughtfully determined his attitude, so far as he can judge, solely according to the will of God.

An important question thrusts itself upon our notice in relation to this primary obligation.

To what extent is the State justified in exacting punishment? It would seem as if this question has been definitely determined by St. Paul's explicit statement, "He beareth not the sword in vain," and by our Lord's tacit acceptance of the fact of imprisonment as it is expressed in many of His parables. The basic ethical principle which justifies punishment is that, apart from punishment in a disordered community, law would rapidly cease to function. Appeals to reason assume that the individual is reasonable, but every individual is at once rational and irrational. This is the problem created by sin. Kant argues ingeniously that there is no violation of the law of love in sentencing the criminal, because if the criminal were rightly constituted he would sentence himself. Perhaps it would be more correct to say, he would acquiesce in a sentence on some other who had committed this offence, since a rightly constituted person would not be an offender. Carlyle satirically carries this theory to the final limit when he censures Ignatius Loyola for not consenting to be damned. Most people, as Bishop Butler would express it, have not faculties for this kind of discussion. They prefer the simple ground that the right to impose law carries with it the right to enforce it. In some instances enforcement can only be secured through the punishment of the offender.

Punishment, however, has various aspects, and much discussion has arisen on the validity of the various kinds of punishment. Usually a fourfold division is adopted in this connection, though it must be confessed that the fourfold division, while very popular, is not strictly logical, as each term is not exclusive of the other. Punishment may be by this division: (i) Vindictive. (ii) Preventive. (iii) Deterrent. (iv) Reformative.

(i) The word *vindictive* has acquired in recent years an unhealthy complexion. Even such a gracious master of the English language as Professor Quiller-Couch speaks of the vindictive God of the Old Testament. Apart from the theological infelicity of the expression, we can only hope that the purest recording angel dropped a tear and blotted

out the offending word. All suggestion of malice or personal animosity must be removed from the definition of the word in its present connection. We suffer a great deal from the lack of precision in speech. Ruskin gives the true sense of the word as it is employed in relation to punishment: "All true justice is vindictive to vice as it is rewarding to virtue" (*Lectures on Art*, Relation of Arts to Morals, para. 90). The question that presents itself is, Can there be any of the three remaining forms of punishment without including the first in the conception? It would seem that a clear apprehension of the nature of law demands an answer in the negative.

Before any punishment can be inflicted there must be a violation of law. If a father were convinced that a diet of bread and water for a month would produce some gracious moral reformation in his child, he would not be justified in imposing it unless he could satisfy the child that there were certain violations of the law of the home that invited this particular form of punishment. Whether any violation of paternal law would justify a diet of bread and water for a month is, of course, outside the point of the illustration. A clear recognition of this fact helps considerably in determining the technical issue. Punishments may be permissible, may even be necessary, and yet a particular punishment may be condemned as unduly severe, and therefore defeating the object of all punishment, respect for existing law. If the punishment appears as manifestly unjust and altogether disproportionate to the crime, then law is depreciated rather than enhanced by the infliction of the penalty. An instance may be given from the practice that prevailed amongst jurymen in the eighteenth century of attaching an absurdly low fictitious value to articles that had been purloined, so as to avoid the necessity of passing sentence of death on the thief. It is on record that a woman was hanged for stealing a handkerchief with an intrinsic value of only 10d. Any sum over a shilling invited the death penalty. But we must not mistake blunders in legislation for the principle which underlies legislation. Either a person should go entirely unpunished for every violation of law, or else vindictive punishment is inherent in social organisation.

(ii) But once the principle is conceded, there is a further ethical duty to consider, the relation of the punishment

to the well-being of the community, and along this line there is room for the introduction of those further ideas to which attention has already been directed. Obviously, all punishment should have in it something of a *preventive* character. The distinction between prevention and reform is somewhat subtle. If we are to maintain it, prevention would relate to such types of punishment as remove from the offender the opportunity of transgressing in the same manner again, without necessarily creating any moral reaction in his mind. A driver of a motor-car who has been repeatedly reckless may have his licence permanently cancelled. He may be as reckless as before, but he can no longer drive a motor-car recklessly, assuming that he accepts the decision of the court and keeps away from the wheel. In an imperfect society it is obvious that irresponsible beings must receive treatment of this sort. We confine madmen. Although this cannot be classed under the category of punishment, yet it affords an illustration of the necessity of removing possibilities of evil from those who are incapable of exercising certain properties belonging to citizens without abusing their privilege.

The limits of prevention open up a closely allied field of controversy. The general principle is quite clear, and certain applications of it are immediately obvious, but the limits of the liberty of the individual have always to be considered in relation to the further question of the individual's inalienable rights. Such forms of prevention as would hinder permanently the exercise of any lawful function require to be surrounded with the most rigid safeguards, otherwise the unscrupulous may find along this avenue opportunities for inflicting evil, comparable to the older scandals that attach to unregulated vindictive punishment. Amongst other problems that emerge in this connection is the withdrawal of the ordinary rights of parentage. There is a case on record in which a woman was deprived of the custody of her child through the enforcement of the Act that permitted a magistrate to remove a young person from consorting with thieves. The evidence in this particular case was that the boy's mother stole twelve sods of turf some years previously. Representation to a superior authority remedied this injustice in that particular case, but it warns the student of Ethics that simple prevention is not as simple as some people are inclined to think.

(iii) *Deterrent* punishment has reference to the effect upon other members of the community. This is concomitant with all kinds of punishment, and, if punishment is properly regulated, exercises a profound moral influence on the community. It is also the aim of punishment of the individual to prevent a repetition of the crime, but this aspect merges into reformative punishment. The idea underlying this is that such measures should be taken as will result in the creation of a new attitude towards society, so that revolt may be turned into co-operation. In cases of delinquent children reformative methods are now usually adopted, and Borstal institutions have produced good results in many instances.

(iv) It needs to be repeated that all punishment to be equitable must be vindictive. The case of the incorrigible establishes this fact. Where *reformation* is impossible owing to the resistance offered by the individual, the right to punish must remain. Aristotle, with his usual acumen, perceives that there are individuals who cannot resist temptation, though they are conscious of deep remorse at seasons. Longfellow says of the poet Burns:

> " He feels the force,
> The treacherous undertow and stress,
> Of wayward passion, and no less
> The keen remorse."

In such cases, it would be impossible to make the justice of punishment depend upon the depth of the repentance. A deeper degree of guilt is found in licentiousness where the good is positively resisted and the evil accepted. Here the desire for reform is absent, and it would be manifestly improper to suspend punishment until the desire is awakened. The Christian recognises that the holiness of God is unalterably opposed to sin, and this opposition must have its effect both in the case of the repentant and the unrepentant. That reaction to sin, which is called the wrath of God, lies in the nature of holiness and unholiness, and cannot be altered or made dependent upon consequences. This view is not popular at the present time, but it is plainly the view of the Old and New Testaments, and is the only logical position which can be adopted in relation to punishment in general. As has been said in the foregoing discussion, it does not exclude from consideration such a

gradation of punishment as shall most reasonably issue in the reformation of the punished, but it does not fall into the error of making punishment entirely dependent upon its preventive, deterrent, or reformative power.

Two important developments in the use of force have been much discussed in modern times. They are (*a*) *Capital Punishment*, (*b*) *War*. It is not usually seen that these two have a very close ethical relation.

Capital Punishment

It is obvious that if punishment is merely reformative, capital punishment cannot be defended on ethical principles. Yet we have to recognise that the civil authority in all ages has claimed this right. Further, both in the Old and New Testament the right is conceded as part of the authority resident in the State. St. Paul tells us that the civil authority bears not the sword in vain. No doubt the term "sword" may be taken as a symbol for all enforcement of authority, but in the particular circumstances in which the first readers of the Epistle to the Romans lived, the exercise of civil authority involved the taking away of life. The Old Testament injunction put a peculiarly sacred value upon humanity, and as a consequence demanded the punishment with the sword of the individual who outraged this sanctity. Our Lord in His parables accepts this position, taking it for granted. He recognises the right to resort to punitive measures against obstinate offenders, and does not question the justice of His hearers' conclusion: "He will miserably destroy those wicked men." Indeed, in St. Mark's narrative, and in St. Matthew's account of the wedding feast, our Lord Himself is represented as adopting this language.

It may be that a State would find it convenient to abandon the practice of capital punishment. In such circumstances it would be the duty of the Christian to acquiesce, as there is resident in a State the inherent right of providing for the punishment of transgressors according to its judgment and the circumstances of the time. But in view of the explicit statements and implications of both the Old and New Testament the right of capital punishment for murder, as distinct from the exercise of the right, seems to be clearly established. It is no violation of the general principle to

say that a State may, in certain circumstances, abandon the exercise of the right. The justification for such an action would be that the aim of capital punishment had been achieved. Human life would be regarded as so sacred that the cases of violation would be rare. The reason for such violation would lie in a momentary or prolonged domination of the spirit of hatred in an individual who would stand out as being exceptionally below the general moral level of the community.

War

The difficult problem of war remains with us. If what has been said above holds true, then war is the last form of vindictive punishment. Where an individual resists arrest in a civilised community, the police are entitled to use reasonable force. Where a mob assembles for riotous purposes, the mob can be dispersed by force. It is not always seen that in both these instances we have the identical principle that results in war. The evil-doer may decline to submit to punishment, and in such circumstances the authority of the law must be vindicated. The ordinary person is inclined to scoff at these refinements. The question is asked, " Is there really any comparison between the dispersion of a mob in which a few persons may be slightly injured, and the horrors of aeroplane bombs and poison gas ?" The answer from the ethical standpoint must be that the principle may remain even though the consequences may be greatly magnified. A State is under obligation to protect its citizens from the evilly disposed within its own borders. It is equally under obligation to protect its citizens from the aggression of those who are under a different form of government. War is the last dread exhibition of the evil of the human heart.

The problem is rendered much more acute when it is remembered that there is rarely anything approaching a just war on either side. The main principles may be clear, though that is not often the case. But even in such circumstances there is an intermingling of human pride, human ambition, and undue patriotism which enter as vitiating elements, even into a cause that might be regarded as originally righteous. So long as the essential principles of justice can be violated, and a company of people possessed

of power can combine to violate them, the possibility of war cannot be excluded from human thought. The Divine command is to love our enemies. But it is obvious that, so long as this command is ignored by certain of the human race, the question of justice tempering love at once arises. It is for this reason that a paradox displays itself even in the New Testament declarations. The same Lord Who said "Love your enemies" required that even a brother should be esteemed as a heathen man and a publican. In such circumstances there was a rupture of the ordinary bonds of love. The duty of the aggrieved in a case of this kind is to see that the hindrance to the ordinary exercises of beneficence is not found in his disposition or final purpose. The demand for repentance illustrates the fact that love itself cannot be exercised in all its fulness where the object resists the overtures of love. Much that has been written about the angry Jehovah, the tribal God of the Jews, is wrecked by the simple recognition of this abiding ethical principle. God Himself is angry with the sinner every day. The Stone which the builders rejected grinds to powder those on whom it falls. If we are to base our Ethics on the New Testament, such startling facts must be included in our survey.

When our Lord was talking to Pontius Pilate He said to him: "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence." It is impossible to interpret these words as suggesting that the Christian lives under an alternative jurisdiction to that which belongs to the State. Much evil has resulted in experience from an insistence on this particular line of interpretation. We have to regard our Lord's message as teaching that while the Christian is subject to the ordinary laws that govern humanity, he is also under the control and direction of God Himself. But, while He works through these human agencies, He moulds them according to His will by the operation of different laws and principles, not necessarily discordant with those which prevail in the State. In our limited and imperfect condition, we have to add that usually the requirements of God are at least partially discordant with human development at every stage in its progress. When we consider the arbitrament of war, the same difficulty confronts us as that

which emerges when we consider ordinary State legislation. The powers that be are ordained of God, and this is so because reason is the parent of law. Yet many laws are intrinsically irrational, and many States have imposed unlawful demands on their subjects.

The same circumstances emerge in inter-State relations. Just as there are unlawful claims to property, sometimes supported by the civil authority, so there may be an unlawful appropriation of a neighbouring territory. As there are outbreaks of violence in resistance to general requirements, which for some reason are unpalatable to a section of the community, there may be similar resistance on the part of an opposing State to that which is intrinsically a lawful demand. Within the State, punishment is inflicted on the resisters. Outside the State, when negotiation fails, the final recourse must be to war. It is a sad commentary on our undeveloped moral condition that the States of the world are still compelled to recognise that negotiations may fail. The division into separate nationalities, with the consequent growth of misunderstanding, helps forward this innate tendency to hostility. In time of war a State has the right to demand of its citizens that all negotiation with the enemy shall be broken off. Trade must be discontinued, because trade implies a relation of friendly co-operation. The State can demand of its citizens that in the supreme issue in which it is struggling for its existence, no effort shall be spared to maintain its integrity.

Anxious questions arise in many minds concerning an issue of this character. Should the Christian partake in an unjust war? What are the grounds on which his judgment should be formed? Here, as in the commercial world, it is impossible for the individual to determine his course of conduct without reference to others, and the interrelations are so complex that it is probably not possible for any individual correctly to estimate the merits of the conflict. In such circumstances, he must give weight to the ordinary providence of God that placed him under the government of a particular State. He must avoid all acts of unrighteous aggression or uncontrolled revenge so far as they may affect him personally, and for the remainder he must cast this heavy burden upon the Lord. No good has ever been effected by a section of Christians choosing the moment of conflict to upbraid the Government of their country.

Just as the wise individual, who seeks to remonstrate with a friend, would choose, if possible, a moment of calm reflection in preference to a time when angry passions had been roused, so it seems to be the duty of the Christian to develop principles of life and justice in the calmer periods of a nation's existence, and to depend more on prayer and personal example in the hour of a great crisis. It need not be denied that where the moral wrong is patent, a Christian may have to incur even the penalty of death, rather than submit to a violation of all the principles of justice. But in our modern world with its complex relations it is scarcely competent for the individual to determine that such a situation has arisen.

It is well known that the Society of Friends (" Quakers ") have taken a strong line on this matter, although in the recent Great War they were seriously divided as to their proper course of conduct. Every respect must be given to those who hold that our Lord's words hinder the employment of force in any circumstances. The Friends are at least consistent, for they apply the same principle of interpretation to the words " Swear not at all," and in their earlier days they objected to dyes on the rather quaint ground that dyes conceal dirt. But it may be contended that notwithstanding their earnest efforts to observe the express commands of our Lord, the Friends failed to impress their principles on the vast body of the community, not altogether because the community was not yet ripe for such high endeavour, but because the logical conclusion of their argument would abolish prisons, police, magistrates, and all the machinery of a modern State.

The large bulk of Christians recognise the possibility of war. The Church of England teaches that the King's Majesty rules all estates and degrees committed to his charge by God, and restrains with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers. It is a corollary from this general statement that it is lawful for Christian men at the commandment of the magistrate to wear weapons and serve in a war. The Westminster Confession contends that " God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under Him over the people, for His Own glory and the public good; and, to this end, hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defence and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punish-

ment of evil-doers." The ethical principle which justifies this attitude has been developed above.

If it is right in any circumstances to take life, then the abstract justifiability of war cannot be denied. Christians have not been pacifists throughout the centuries, and there is no valid ethical consideration which compels to pacifism.

In all these problems the root question concerns itself with the attitude of God and the saint to the question of sin, and the teaching of the Scriptures is quite clear that sin cannot go unpunished, and that war itself is at once an exhibition on a horrifying scale of man's sinfulness and a punishment for man's sin. Job of old wrote: " Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment " (Job xix. 29). While it may not be possible to accept the pacifists' position, States are becoming conscious in these days that conscientious scruples must be more and more regarded. There are avenues of usefulness to the community in time of war that do not involve actual militancy, and those who feel their conscience aggrieved have been able to undertake works of a remedial character, as stretcher-bearers, hospital attendants, etc. But it is a duty on the part of the Christian not to embarrass the Government in times of acute national crisis, and many instances can be offered in the Old and New Testaments to enforce this attitude. The Old Testament is particularly fruitful in illustration because it depicts history on a wide scale.

While every effort should be made to stop the nations of the world from multiplying weapons of offence, it does not seem possible in our present conditions to secure a complete disarmament. The civil sword and the policeman's truncheon are weapons recognised as necessary. Here, as in many other instances, the Christian should direct his energies to the underlying conditions that lead to suspicion and distrust amongst the nations. So far as his powers carry him, he should aim at the avoidance of entanglements and treaties that are fraught with the possibility of national disturbance. He should encourage every movement towards a better understanding with the nations that have most truly appreciated the Ethics of the gospel. He should remain in prayer that God would hasten the time when men shall learn war no more. Beyond this, until a change of heart possesses any given people, the abandonment of

mere mechanical inventions, or the reduction of the weapons of offence, will prove only temporary expedients that will be thrust aside whenever a serious threat manifests itself in the counsels of the nations.

The State is under obligation to afford Christians protection in the lawful exercise of their worship as well as in the ordinary affairs of life. Sometimes this obligation has been violated, and modern conditions reveal to us the sad fact that we have not yet passed beyond the days of deliberate intolerance. The State ought not to usurp the prerogatives of God. It does so when it interferes with the individual conscience in matters that have no direct connection with public order and decency. In such circumstances the Christian can only act like Daniel, and pray on his knees as he did aforetime, recking not the consequences. But when the State offers protection to the Christian citizen in the matters relating to the soul, so far as that can become the subject of special organisation and control, and further gives to the citizen the advantages in education and civil protection that belong to every civilised community, the Christian citizen is bound, in return, to offer the State unquestioning obedience to those laws which do not encroach upon the rights of conscience, and co-operation in every movement for the betterment of the conditions of life. Our Lord aptly summarised Christian duty when He declared, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE CHURCH

THE WORD "CHURCH" has various significations, but in so far as it indicates bodies of people who may or may not be known to one another, and who are linked to God by the bond of living faith, it cannot form the subject of any regulations. It can only present itself as regulative in the sphere of individual Ethics. But the Church, just because it is composed of men who have the ordinary social instincts, rapidly assumes the character of a company of people distinguished from others by the expression of certain distinctive features. On the day of Pentecost, the Church became cognisable when a multitude accepted baptism, and definitely associated themselves with the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

In this aspect of its life, the Church first appears as a voluntary association, and is subject to those regulations in the State which affect all such organisations. It is the duty of the State to permit citizens to combine for lawful ends, and to guarantee them reasonable liberty of action in such combinations. But very quickly the Church, by reason of its claim to bind men together in a unity devised by God Himself, passes beyond the bounds of any original voluntary society. As an organisation, it makes claims that in theory are binding on all men. Kings are subject to the law of God, and are under obligation to submit to those provisions which He has instituted for the development of true spiritual life. Citizens, whatever their relation to the State, cannot relieve themselves of their responsibility towards God. In theory, therefore, the Church is "catholic" (in the original meaning of the term)—that is to say, it makes demands that are binding upon all men. It exercises an authority somewhat similar to that which is manifest in the State. It is true that the ground of this authority is different. The Church is not at liberty to employ force to compel allegiance, though it has not always been mindful of this limitation. St. Paul, speaking to Christians, tells us that the weapons of our warfare are

not carnal. The Church has to depend upon moral and spiritual power for the furtherance of its purposes, and can exercise by way of discipline only the authority inherent in all co-operations, of excluding unworthy members from its circle. But just because of the high spiritual claim which the Church can make, it becomes inevitable that the relation between Church and State should demand consideration.

Historically, the relations have taken shape in one or other of the varying forms:

(i) The Church in the days of the Apostles existed as a voluntary society, sometimes under the direction of the State, and sometimes the object of State restriction. This condition of affairs persisted until the first quarter of the fourth century. By that time, the Church had attained such dimensions that restriction was no longer possible, and it stepped rapidly into the position, first of toleration, and then of deliberate recognition as the spiritual expression of the nation's life.

(ii) The second stage had now been reached. In process of time, the Church through its powerful organisation attained greater and greater autonomy, until at last it issued its orders to the State. Pope Boniface VIII, in the year 1302, issued the famous Bull "Unam Sanctam," in which he claimed that both the spiritual and material sword were in the hands of Peter. "One," he said, "is exercised for the Church, the other in truth by the Church. One is in the hand of the priest, the other in the hands of the kings and soldiers, but at the word and sufferance of the priest." This was a condition of affairs that prevailed in the middle ages, with many a protest from the temporal sovereigns and many a vicissitude seriously affecting the Church. The Church was regarded as the State in its spiritual aspect, and as the spiritual took precedence of the temporal, the Church ruled the destinies of men. In such circumstances there could be only one visible Church. Hence Aquinas, the great Doctor of the thirteenth century, argued, with considerable subtlety, that as utterers of false coin and forgers were visited with death by the State, it was only reasonable that perverters of morals and utterers of false opinions should suffer the same penalty.

This claim to a monopoly of truth, resident in the visible organisation, led to the horrors of the Inquisition, and to such enormities as the burning to death of seven friars

at a village in Yorkshire, because they insisted on adhering strictly to the old rule of Francis d'Assisi, and declined to hold property. Not unnaturally, men began to ask if this were really the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed sectional revolts of a widespread character from this conception. Of course the dominant Ecclesiastics frequently represented these revolts as immoral in tendency and fantastic in theology. In some instances the representation was well founded. But thoughtful men began to consider that, possibly, the very extravagances which they deplored were the result of claims which they could not endorse on the part of the dominant Church.

(iii) The great upheaval of the sixteenth century, known in history as the Reformation, brought matters to a head. The idea of a State Church co-terminous with the nation still prevailed, but some measure of freedom was introduced by the claim that each State had a right to order its worship according to the express wish of its people. The State reasserted its God-given character, and claimed, in its own sphere, independence of the Church. In fact, it claimed that in its sphere the Church was subject to its control and direction. This phase of development is known by students of social progress as Jurisdictionalism. It could not be conceived at that time that a State could exist without an official Church of its own, and this form of relation between the Church and the State persists at the present time.

The seventeenth century introduced a period of bitter conflict between various sections of those who all professed and called themselves Christians. The eighteenth century introduced an era of widespread scepticism. The State, in an effort to compose the differences between the contending religionists, and later, in a desire to mitigate the condition of those who had excluded themselves from the Church, introduced various Acts of Toleration. Hence, in England we have the spectacle of a State Church creating (by a fiction) a large body of people who are included in the comprehension of the Church, but are permitted to differ widely from her teaching and practice. This is the real meaning of the word "Nonconformist"—*i.e.*, a member of the Church of England who is permitted by Statute to depart from her authorised formularies, and in some instances from her doctrine. It was inevitable that such a

condition of affairs should issue in the creation of bodies who described themselves as Free Churches, and should give a great impetus to the idea of a separation of Church and State.

(iv) In the U.S.A. and in the British Dominions this separation has been effected, and all Churches are tolerated by the State, while none of them can claim to be the official religion of the people.

Strange as it may appear, there is no sound ethical principle that enables the Christian to determine between the claim of freedom and the claim of Jurisdictionalism. It is largely a matter of expediency, and so long as the State does not press heavily on the individual conscience, there is no violation of any principle of Ethics in a majority of her citizens determining that a particular form of religious worship shall be taken as characteristic of the national type.

Nor is there any such thing as a really free Church. Most of the Churches which come under this designation enjoy their present freedom under the authority of an Act of Parliament, an Act which frequently embodies an expression of their foundation religious principles. It seems an absurdity to claim that a Church is independent of Parliament, when it functions under an Act of Parliament. Even the Roman Catholic Church, which still claims the old position of monopoly, autonomy and coercive power, has been compelled to enter into concordats with States, and, where no such recognition is given to her, has had many of her rights protected by Acts of Parliament (in relation, for example, to marriage).

The tendency runs strongly at present for the separation of Church and State, but it must be confessed that the theory has been attended with grave disadvantages. The State has assumed full magisterial right in matters of education and marriage, and has more and more restricted the authority of the Christian minister. The State is, of course, unable to interfere directly with spiritual authority as such. Even Henry VIII recognised this fact, and advised his Bishops that when they conducted their business without scandal, they had God only for their Judge. But the line between spiritual authority and such enactments as provide for a purely secular education is not easily drawn. The depreciation of the Church has led to the idea in secular States that religion is altogether an individual matter, and that one religion is as good as another, and probably none

of them are much good at all. The conditions of modern life have shown very forcibly that the toleration of all religions may be a step towards the elimination of all religion. Instead of the totalitarian Church of the Middle Ages, we have evolved the totalitarian State of today, which emulates the example of Darius and demands that no petition shall be made of any god or man but itself. Freedom is not simply absence of control.

Following this rapid survey of history, the conclusion seems inevitable that the Christian Church is not tied to any particular form of government, either inherent or external. It has taken on most frequently some features of the form of State control with which it is most familiar. Few recognise that such words as "parish" and "diocese" had originally a civil significance, and were departments under State control, like our modern provinces or counties or shires.

But while it is true that there is an elasticity in the Church in relation to civil order, the Church has certain rights which the State cannot violate without abandoning its claim to obedience. It is an inalienable right of man to approach his Creator after the manner that seems best to his judgment. The State can interfere with religious worship only when it develops, as it sometimes has developed, perverse forms that are inimical to social well-being. Those who advocate what they call complete freedom for the Church should give serious consideration to the repression of polygamy amongst the Mormons, and of the aberrations that manifest themselves from time to time in connection with small fantastic sects. The State can reasonably claim that religious worship ought not to fall behind the moral standard indicated by national progress. Subject to this qualification, the right of worship should be conceded to the individual, and it is contrary to the recognition of man as a true personality, which is the base of all sound Ethics, to restrict him in this direction, where his worship can be justified as a rational expression of true devotion, however much it may vary from the jurisdictional requirements. Again, the Church has the right not only to stimulate the impulse to worship, but to direct it according to those forms which seem best suited to express the religious sentiments of a community. It is open to the State to receive into a position of patronage certain modes of worship, and in this sense to "establish" a Church, but it is not open to the

State to demand that all its subjects shall conform to this standard. If a body of individuals voluntarily abandon the benefits of patronage, they should be permitted to exercise their religious cult undisturbed, unless, in the language of Henry VIII, "scandal is occasioned thereby."

Up to quite recent times modern European States acted on this principle, but we have seen within recent years hampering restrictions in the direction of a negation of the right of individual and community worship that offer a very grave problem to the student of social conditions.

The Church and the Kingdom of God

Many commentators are inclined to equate the idea of the Church and the Kingdom of God, but it seems preferable to take the view that is outlined by Dr. Orr in his article on "The Kingdom of God," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. In his view, the Kingdom of God is the final rule of God in the new heaven and the new earth, which is being realised through human agencies and which God will consummate. It will correspond to the regeneration spoken of by our Lord (Matt. xix. 28), but it is not wholly divorced from present experience. On the contrary, every realisation of God's presence and power in every phase of society is contributory to the ushering in of the full Kingdom and is evidence that the Kingdom of God is among us at the present time. In this view, the Church may be regarded as the spearhead of the Kingdom. It is the spiritual agency which directs the attention of men to the sacred obligations to the things of God.

It has three distinct functions to perform for the bringing in of the Kingdom.

(i) It is the centre of *worship*. Any student of the New Testament must recognise that the Old Testament idea of the assembly of God derives strong support from the language of our Lord and His Apostles. Public worship is an ethical duty clearly laid down in the teaching of Christ: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." This promise is turned into an ethical duty in the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." The Christian who

fails to join in the assembly of the people of God has failed in an important duty.

A tendency has grown up in modern times which must be avoided. Public worship is sometimes regarded as an entertainment. Time and money are spent in securing a rich feast of musical selections. Of course, there can be no objection to good music, but the Christian, when he attends a place of worship, must guard himself against the idea that the choir is there to render his praise by proxy. There is an obligation on all servants of Christ to present themselves before the throne of grace, not only as private individuals, but as a corporate body, seeking God's glory. He who fails to be diligent in this use of the means of grace has failed to fulfil a direct command of his Lord.

(ii) Closely associated with the obligation to worship is the duty of *public witness*. A further tendency has manifested itself here. We hear people say, "I go to church to worship, not to hear the sermon." Sometimes they are more successful in not hearing the sermon than in engaging in worship. But a study of the New Testament establishes the fact that edification is an important part of the public service of the Church. So far as history carries us, the public reading of Scripture and expositions thereon were a feature of both Old Testament and New Testament worship. The origin of the synagogue is wrapped in obscurity, but it evidently emerged to meet a spiritual need in the community, and has the direct sanction of our Lord and His Apostles, who were diligent in attendance at the synagogue until Israel, as a people, refused the further revelation of the Son of God. It is the duty of the Church to provide pastors and teachers. They are the gift of God, and they must be given office according to His provision. The right of testifying to the power and grace that are in Christ Jesus must be exercised by every Christian. But, in addition to this inherent right, which impelled the early Christians when they were driven from Jerusalem to go everywhere preaching the Gospel, provision is made for special servants of God who give themselves wholly to prayer and the study of the Word. The idea underlying this provision becomes apparent on a few moments' reflection. The average Christian is called to take an important part in mundane affairs. As a consequence, his time and energies are occupied in these directions, and he glorifies God in dis-

charging such duties. But if he is to be furnished with the full measure of Divine truth, it is necessary that he should have at his disposal the services of men who are set free from the ordinary burdens of life, that they may devote themselves directly to prayer and the study of the Word. In the sixth chapter of the Acts, the Apostles protested against the suggestion that it was fit that they should forsake the Word of God and "serve tables," while they recognised that the serving of tables, to which they were not called, required men who were full of the Holy Ghost. Unfortunately, many Christians relieve themselves of the duty of attending on those who minister the Word, and many ministers are forced, through the neglect of those who might undertake these duties, to serve tables. Our business is to recognise that the Church has a witness to her own people, by which they may become equipped for better service in the various stations in which God has placed them.

(iii) The third duty which attaches to the Church as a whole, and should not be confined to the Ministry, is the duty of *evangelisation*. The command abides that the gospel is to be preached in all the world, and it is through the proclamation of the good news by servants of the Lord in every department of civil activity that the furtherance of the Kingdom of God is achieved. Every Christian is called upon in the New Testament to give reasons for the hope that is in him, and St. Paul exhorts the Colossians: "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." The Christian life is a powerful testimony, the influence of which cannot be exaggerated, but accompanying a life of devotion there should be a testimony that offers to others an explanation of the secret of power possessed by the saint of God. It is hardly necessary to add that the duty of maintaining this witness amongst the nations of the world is as imperative as the duty of maintaining it in the immediate circle in which the Christian finds himself.

In order to fulfil her great task *the right of discipline* must be conceded to the Church. It is a commonplace of Ethics that any society banded together for a particular purpose has the right to exclude unworthy members. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, it is clearly laid down that the Church has the right of judging those who are within, while those who are without must be left to the judgment of God.

But a right of discipline is one thing, and the rightful exercise of it quite another. There have not been wanting instances of baneful tyranny in the region of Church discipline. The compulsory conversion of Jews in Spain, the horrors of the Inquisition levelled against heretics, modern examples where free thought has been illegitimately curtailed, point the moral in this direction. The Church has an inherent right to expel the unworthy from her communion, but the exercise of it should be rare, and the instance most clearly defined. The Corinthian Church had members who were disorderly in the congregation and drank to excess in the love feast that preceded Holy Communion, yet only one member was deliberately excluded, and Paul makes an earnest appeal for his restoration on repentance.

Church courts have unfortunately earned an unenviable reputation for partisanship. This arises from the fact that the members are frequently untrained in the matter of sifting evidence, and insensible to certain aspects of liberty. The cardinal rule of the New Testament must be observed in all matters of discipline. The ultimate benefit of the offender should take precedence over every other consideration, and nothing but obstinate refusal to acknowledge the plain requirements of God's law can justify the final sentence of excommunication.

It must be borne in mind, however, that contractual obligations have exactly the same weight in spiritual matters as in temporal. Therefore an officer of the Church, who violates the contract to which he has voluntarily submitted in order to obtain office, stands in a quite different relation from the ordinary member of the congregation who does not claim any particular status, and only acknowledges himself bound by the simple elements of Christian faith such as are contained in the Apostles' Creed. This distinction is not always observed, and questions of subscription to Articles have loomed large in the minds of different members of the Church. They have confused, as a consequence, the inherent right of discipline with the further, and different, ethical problem as to the obligations of those who enter into contract as teachers. Frequently, the charge of persecution has been raised when a clergyman has been arraigned for teaching what is regarded as inconsistent with the express doctrine formulated by the Church to which he belongs.

The term "persecution" is here altogether out of place. Every individual who signs a contract exposes himself to the danger of a misinterpretation of its terms, a misinterpretation on his part, or on the part of the other contracting members. In civil life any consequences following such a misapprehension are not regarded as persecution. It is part of the risk involved in undertaking any secular matter, and is provided for by a scrupulous survey of the conditions of the contract.

It must be observed, on the other hand, however, that while the term "persecution" should be discontinued, there is need of great care lest some aspect of Christian truth should be ignored through a too rigid suppression of private opinion on the part of authorised teachers of the gospel. There is not much danger in these days of undue restriction of public opinion so far as professed ministers of the gospel are concerned. There is a wealth of conflicting utterances that would suggest that freedom has been used to the utmost limit. The disadvantage of unrestricted freedom in this connection is that the general public obtains the impression that it really does not much matter what clergymen say. This difficulty can be avoided by the individual, who is a member of that particular class, giving scrupulous attention to the obligations to which he has submitted, so that he can assure his mind before God that he is loyal to the foundation truths of the Gospel, and to the particular formulation which these truths have received at the hands of that section of the Christian Church to which he has given allegiance. Every liberty should be conceded to the individual to employ historical elucidations and modern critical apparatus for the discovery of truth, but nothing can relieve the subject of a declaration from the imperative obligation to justify his action by whole-hearted conformity to the declarations which he has made. Furthermore, it seems to be distinctly unethical to refuse the jurisdiction of a court that has been constituted by the authority to which the individual has submitted, unless this act of freedom is accompanied by a resignation of the position which is preserved to the individual, subject to the condition of such jurisdiction.

In recent times, a great deal of unmeasured comment has been directed against various forms of Church courts. A large body of clergy in England have led a revolt against

the established authority in the various grades of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, culminating in a concerted attack on the Ecclesiastical Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It is competent for any individual in any walk of life to propose reform. But such proposal should be always accompanied with strict obedience to any jurisdiction to which the individual proposing reform is a direct consenting party. This cardinal ethical rule has been frequently ignored in Church matters to the great loss of prestige in the eyes of the general public. It must be pointed out further that matters of discipline are only indirectly spiritual. They refer to the terms of the contract which the individual has undertaken. In the case of the layman, the usual conditions of Church membership are summarised in the Apostles' Creed, and no self-respecting individual should remain a member of a Church, which gives its adhesion to this Creed, if he himself is unable to accept its body of teaching.

There are curious anomalies in this connection, as, for example, cases of Unitarians holding the office of churchwarden in the Church of England. It might be contended that in this instance the Apostles' Creed is not explicit. But, on the other hand, it must be pointed out that the Apostles' Creed receives expansion in the so-called Nicene Creed. Seeing that this Creed is incorporated in the Communion service of the Church of England, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that an individual who accepts office involving attendance at the services of the Church becomes a party to the more explicit statements regarding the Deity of our Lord.

In the case of clergymen who discharge a teaching office, the requirements are of a more rigid character. In "Creedal" Churches the demand is made that the candidate for the Ministry shall signify his assent to certain specific propositions. The court that tries an alleged case of inconsistency with public standards is not responsible for the formulation of the doctrines contained therein. It has the difficult, but much more restricted, task of interpreting the language in the light of grammatical construction, and with such evidence as the history of the origin and use may afford. The case is exactly similar to that which presents itself in the case of a disputed will. The court did not draw the will, but, seeing that its terms have

become a matter of controversy, it seeks to determine the meaning of the controverted passages by reference to the grammatical construction, and to the known wishes of the testator, so far as these are capable of being ascertained. It is an abuse of language to call matters of this sort spiritual. It is true that the language in question relates to spiritual things, but it is the language which is the subject of consideration. If a clergyman is arraigned for drunkenness, it would be rather an absurdity to suggest that his case should be referred for trial by Bishops. Yet, absurd as this position appears to the modern man, it was ecclesiastical law for many years. The sooner clergymen realise that questions of obligation come under the ordinary laws of contract, and are determined in accordance with the ethical principles governing those laws, the better for the peace of the Church.

From what has been said, it becomes at once apparent that every Christian, as such, has an obligation to the Church, and this obligation extends to that particular form of the Church as a corporation that presents itself for his acceptance and support. There is no such thing as a private Christianity. From the very beginning, the Lord "added to the Church daily such as were being saved," and the existence of what are called federal rites, the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and the further insistence upon preaching the Word and "ordaining elders" for this purpose, make it abundantly clear that it is the purpose of God that Christians should unite in fellowship according to the principles of the New Testament for the furtherance of their own spiritual life and the advancement of His Kingdom.

As has been noticed more than once in this discussion, the evil element in the heart of man cannot be excluded from matters of the Church any more than it can from matters of the State. That which was designed of God for the blessing and uplift of His people has been turned into an instrument of injury and repression. The Church of God in its ideal state is something very different from the Church as it has existed in history. It is the duty of Christians to strive by every lawful means to correct abuses. It is equally their duty to abide by the provisions that God has given for the development of spiritual life. A true ecclesiasticism means that every member, according to his office, contributes his part to the development of the body. A false ecclesiasti-

cism elevates the teacher, or the official minister, to a position of authority beyond that which he can claim by reference to the plain Word of God. This elevation has been productive of grave injury to spiritual religion. An amazing example of this undue exaltation of a particular section in the Church of God is found in an interpretation of Isa. xxxii. 20, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters," etc., where the interpreter solemnly informs us that in this passage the ox represents the clergy, and the ass the patient laity!

The New Testament presents us with several pictures of Church activity which impose solemn responsibility on every Christian. Reference has already been made to the idea of the body in which every member has a distinct office. Again, the Church is pictured as a family, and, yet again, as a building composed of living stones. It cannot be urged that in all these cases the reference is to the union of the believer with Christ. There is also an implied obligation, which sometimes finds direct expression, of service in the community as a visible corporation. St. Paul warns the Corinthians that "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." It is to be noticed that the temple here spoken of is the temple of the community, not of the individual. The reference is to defective workmanship, and the word used for "defile" means to mar or spoil. Furthermore, the Epistles envisage a community. The members are exhorted to speak unto one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Also, one of the grounds which is enforced as an argument for the observance of certain duties, is that they are "members one of another." While the Christian must ever be sensible of the dangers which surround extravagant ecclesiasticism, he cannot fulfil his duty to God apart from co-operation with the people of the Lord who are assembled in His Name.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CHRISTIAN AND CULTURE

IT IS FREQUENTLY forgotten that Christianity laid the foundations of a high and widespread culture, inheriting its noble aspirations from the Jewish people. Education has passed from the direction of the Church, and has become the business of the State. Many reasons may be given for this change, which follows the same line of development as matters of marriage, divorce, and control of testamentary dispositions. It must be admitted with sorrow that the Church itself had no small part in rendering such changes inevitable, if not inherently necessary. One of the contributory causes without a doubt is the growth of various denominations, splitting up the unity of the State into several distinct parties, each of which, it may be added, became exceedingly jealous of any advantage offered to the other. But the fact that in modern times Christian denominations have not been able, in the judgment of the State, to fulfil the exacting requirements of modern education must not blind us to the enormous services rendered in times past. The Church can at least claim that its action awakened the State to a sense of responsibility in this direction.

But no Christian can be content to exclude the knowledge of God and of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus from the education of children. In the Old Testament, the duty was laid upon the parents to teach the commandments of God diligently unto their children. In the New Testament, the parents are exhorted to bring up their children in the fear and nurture of the Lord. This is an obligation which is frequently forgotten, and many parents, otherwise well-intentioned, believe that they have fulfilled their duty in this regard if they transfer the task to the Sunday-school teacher and the Christian minister. That much can be done to assist the parents by the agencies established for the dissemination of sound religious truth cannot be denied. But the ethical responsibility still remains, and the example of Christian living, and such

instruction as it is within the power of the parent to give, are demanded of all servants of Christ. The enthronement of Christ as Lord of the home is one of the crying needs of the present time. Further, it is the duty of every Christian to secure that adequate religious instruction shall be given to the children of the community. The means which may be adopted towards securing this end are capable of variation, but the need itself must be kept steadily in view. Neither pains nor expense should be spared to provide that every child shall know the essential truths of Scripture and have a real acquaintance with the revelation of God.

In our modern days, as in the period of the Renaissance which preceded the days of the Reformation, there is a widespread Humanism which pins its faith to the value in the moral sphere of sound knowledge and the demands of Naturalistic Rational Ethics. Humanism has never succeeded because it refuses to grapple with the underlying evil in the heart of man. Again and again, Utopian dreams have been indulged in, and a golden age of humanity has been prophesied. Again and again, the dream has been rudely shattered. No knowledge, as such, is foreign to the Christian system. But it is necessary to enter a protest in the name of the teaching of Jesus and His Apostles against the idea that knowledge in itself is capable of leading man to his true goal. It is not the knowledge that is wrong, it is the man, and the Christian needs to emphasise again and again that unless a man is a new creation in Christ Jesus, his very knowledge may but "puff him up." St. Paul had this difficulty with the Corinthians, the assumption of a superiority which was ill-founded. It is certainly not lacking in the community today. If men start from the assumption that they are capable of self-development and self-expression which will ultimately lead them to God, they are destined to suffer bitter disillusionment. No education is worth the name that does not insist upon the individual's dependence on God and upon the absolute necessity of grace.

It is sometimes argued that science should be permitted to develop in full freedom from any theological presuppositions. Like most generalities, this particular statement embodies a truth and invites a serious error. If by science is meant the careful observance and relation of phenomena, then the Christian's science is as free as it can possibly be,

and is no different from that of the pagan. The ancient Babylonians were apparently aware of the transit of Venus, and no one requires to be a Christian to discover that in Euclidean geometry the three angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles. But the error which is invited is the assumption that when phenomena are observed and carefully tabulated, any inference whatever can be drawn from the tabulated facts, and that such inferences can be regarded as part of science proper.

In order to correct this mistaken attitude, the Christian must remember that ultimately all things come from God, and if this postulate be admitted, all sciences are related the one to the other, however much they may pursue their own special investigations in accordance with their own particular axioms. It is worthy of note in this connection that the great advance in modern science which the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed was brought about in the first instance by a theological presupposition. Men like Newton and Faraday argued that if God were one, the world of His creation would be one also, and they looked for such lines of relation as would bring the universe into a complete harmony. It is because Science has arrogated to itself in some instances the claims of Metaphysics, and has paraded that which is sectional as that which is ultimate, that much difficulty has arisen. The scientist has passed beyond his sphere, and become a very poor philosopher. The philosopher, whose territory has been unlawfully invaded, has retaliated upon the scientist. The war which arose some years ago regarding the relation of Theology to Science seems now to have somewhat shifted, and modern students are treated to bitter exchanges in the artillery of words between the philosopher and the individual who calls himself a practical man of Science.

It is the duty of the Christian to receive all true knowledge from every quarter with due humility. He must not hastily assume that a discovery of Science which appears to conflict with his interpretation of Revelation is of necessity in conflict with truth. But, on the other hand, the Christian must maintain his liberty against the aggression of so-called Science. In modern times the word evolution is employed very like the " open sesame " of the *Arabian Nights*. But care is needed. There have been many forms of this theory since the days of Aristotle to the present. The evolutionary

theory of Hegel, for example, is something very different from the evolutionary theory of Haeckel, and both of these again, while they display affinities, are definitely distinguished from the theories of Darwin. Evolution as a scientific working hypothesis offers no conflict whatever with any Christian principle. When, for example, the Bible states that God formed the heavens and the earth, the Christian is left a wide freedom as to the precise manner of the Divine formation.

It is not the province of this work to enter into the various forms of the evolutionary theory, or the different methods of reconciling scientific fact with the statements of the Old Testament. That is the province of the apologist. But the matter touches upon Ethics when the alleged relation is said to be one of incompatibility. The Christian is under obligation to assert the supremacy of the Divine. He cannot accept any position that would exclude God from His universe, or reduce Him to the limits of an unknown force, "a stream or tendency making for righteousness." It is the contention of the Christian that no recognised fact in nature compels any such deduction, and it is the duty of the Christian to assert uncompromisingly the rights of the soul. Any system that reduces man to the position of a mere automaton, or denies the sacred quality of personality, conflicts with Revelation, and cannot therefore be accepted.

Art has also its claims. God has implanted in the human soul the appreciation of the beautiful. Were man rightly constituted, every quality would be in harmony with every other, and no question could arise as to the morality of the pursuit of any natural power. The fact that man was endowed with a special aptitude would be the justification for the exercise of it. But in a disordered creation it is no longer possible to adopt this attitude. Every power of the soul has suffered distortion through the invasion of sin, and the concept of the beautiful offers no exception. Art can be made the minister of the higher aspirations of the soul. It can also become degraded, and elevate the sensuous, sometimes even the sensual, at the expense of the spiritual. Plato perceived this long ago, and in his *Republic* has much to say on the question of unsuitable types of music, such as the plaintive, effeminate and convivial. The pursuit of Art for Art's sake is another generalisation which expresses a truth and invites an error. Unquestionably Art has its own canons, and these must not be violated. But, on the

other hand, they must be exercised in relation to the moral harmony of the whole. Kant declares that everything can be a subject of Art except the disgusting, but it is possible for man to minister to his depraved nature under the plea of gratifying the æsthetic sense. The truly beautiful is always harmonious with the truly moral, but the soul that misses the higher aspiration which seeks after God may degrade the artistic gift and pander to the lower sentiments of humanity. It is because of this danger that the Christian is under obligation to consecrate his art. That which simply inflames passion, or directs the mind to the unsuitable and the unworthy, does not lose its taint because it is decked in the garments of æstheticism. The right of expression in the realm of Art must be governed by the obligation to glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are His.

A similar question can be raised concerning the right of expression in speech. The famous figure of Wilkes introduces us to a long controversy which disturbed England with regard to the freedom of the press. Wilkes was not a very estimable character, nor was he a writer of remarkable eminence, but his comments upon the King's speech raised acutely the question of the freedom of the individual to give expression to his opinions on high political matters. As not infrequently happens, the courts were juster than the people. It is one of the ironies of our condition that we make laws which we refuse to keep. But the issue of a rather sordid controversy led to a very wide extension of the liberties of the subject. A writer of a very different character, though one who shares in Wilkes' disregard of religious opinion, Professor J. B. Bury, advocates the view that " the life of the individual citizen should be allowed to ' run its course from the cradle to the grave without receiving from the State any disturbance or impulse of a religious character,' " and contends that the present laws in England against blasphemy, which prohibit a free thinker from leaving money for the spread of secular opinions, are an instance of intolerance. He admits that such restrictions on freedom are not very serious, but suggests that there is a danger that they may become serious (Preface to *Ruffini on Religious Liberty*).

This opens the problem as to the limits of *freedom of speech*. The modern totalitarian State finds it necessary to curb the expression of opinion, and does so very drastically. News-

papers can no longer be relied upon to express a sectional viewpoint. They are dragooned in the interest of the governing authority. A similar difficulty arises in countries where the press is only theoretically free, through the operation of large combines which are financed by wealthy individuals who have some particular propagandist ambition. It is a singular fact, which is open to more than one interpretation, that the Harmsworth brothers, with their remarkable genius for newspaper activity, represented at one time the three political parties that were struggling for pre-eminence in England. One was a Conservative, a second a Liberal, and a third represented Labour. This may be simply an accident (similar to the curious fact that Earl Baldwin's son was a supporter of the Labour position), but it issued in practice in the control of very large organs of public opinion, and the absorption of many minor newspapers that had previously exhibited a genuine provincial opinion. The interests of the State, and the operations of the combines, have conspired in modern times to restrict the liberty of the press. The emergence of such features gives pertinency to the question, " Are there any limits to freedom of speech ?"

A negative answer cannot be returned in view of the following considerations. The State exercises its authority to prohibit such an exhibition of freedom as may imperil, or embarrass, the Government. Two issues are in conflict, the sacred right of the individual to give utterance to that which, ethically at all events, is dictated by his conscience, and the sacred right of the community to prevent disintegration and dissension.

The ethical problem lies in securing such a delicate balance between these two, that liberty may not degenerate into licence, or restriction into tyranny. In a well-ordered community no such problem would arise. The obligation to do unto my neighbour as I would he should do unto me, observed by all classes, would remove the conflict between the individual as such and the community in the midst of which he lives. But, in the present mixed condition of society, the State must be given a certain measure of discretion as to the amount of freedom that can be tolerated. The popular judgment is that opinions as such should be given free expression, but actions come directly under State control. This popular distinction, however, cannot be pressed logically. An inflammatory speech may lead to action, and

even a measured opinion may exercise such influence as to undermine the authority of a particular individual or a commonwealth. The comparatively stable condition of society in modern days, a stability which is now threatened, has obscured the fact that it is ideas that are really operative. The limits of free speech cannot be drawn on any cut-and-dried principle of this sort. It is the duty of the State to interfere as little as possible with the progress of ideas. But it cannot be denied that, in self-protection, the State may, and sometimes must, inhibit such expressions as threaten its very existence.

There are two lines along which this restriction can operate ethically:

(i) The expression of opinions which are destructive of moral order, and are so judged by the general opinion of a community, cannot be allowed free utterance. It would be along this line of argument that ethical justification might be sought for the existing laws against blasphemy. The problem would arise as to the precise meaning that attaches to the word. Even in heathen States that which is grossly obscene and inherently vicious has been condemned by the judgment of the people and restrained by the exercise of authority. Few would be found to advocate such licence of utterance as would permit an individual to reveal the evil workings of a corrupt mind before a shocked and startled audience.

(ii) The second line of restriction would relate to public safety. The advocacy of open revolution and the depreciation of all authority, being suicidal to the existence of a State or Government, must be repressed in self-defence. A state may consider it politic to permit a certain measure of inflammatory language, but it must reserve to itself the right to determine when the limit of its patience has been reached. Due regard to the liberty of the individual and due concern for the existence of law must be carefully balanced, and a final judgment determined upon after mature reflection.

It is the duty of a Christian that he should not suffer " as a busybody in other men's matters." The exact meaning of the word used by St. Peter here is not easy to determine, but it suggests one who undertakes an oversight that does not properly belong to him. Moffatt, with characteristic boldness which is not always to be admired, renders the

word "revolutionary," cutting the Gordian knot rather than unravelling it. It is perfectly obvious that intemperateness of language which may incite civil dissension is unworthy of a follower of Christ. At times the most restrained expression of Christian sentiment may invite the hostility of the State, but the Christian can console himself in such circumstances by reflecting that the State that is so inflamed must be out of harmony with true ideals. At present, a very large measure of freedom is enjoyed, and it is a Christian duty to avoid saying anything that would imperil the present freedom of speech. To go close to the limits of legitimate liberty is to invite restriction.

The Christian finds it easier to determine the limits of individual freedom considered as such. His duty to his neighbour, and the cardinal law of love, ought to place a curb upon his utterances sufficient to ensure that liberty shall not degenerate into licence. Yet it must be confessed that carelessness in spreading hurtful gossip is by no means absent in Christian circles. The Christian should ever have before his mind:

(i) The obligation to strict truthfulness, not as easy to fulfil as some might imagine.

(ii) The obligation to Christian charity, which would prevent the publishing of that which is unkind and hurtful, except under the pressure of a real ethical necessity.

(iii) The obligation to edification, which is so frequently insisted upon in the New Testament. Idle speech, which is objectless and in its own nature foolish, is unworthy of our high calling in Christ Jesus.

There is danger, however, that an excessive scrupulosity may hinder that freedom of utterance that belongs to the joyousness of life. Strange as it may sound to some, a good joke is neither objectless nor foolish. Humour is a gift of God, even though Mark Twain is reported to have married his wife because she could not see a joke. Perhaps he thought he had a sufficient surplus of humour to supply the family! When the Apostle speaks of "jesting which is not convenient," the context plainly indicates that he was referring to that play upon words, so common at the time on the stage, which derived its attraction for the multitude because of the underlying suggestion of evil. It is rather significant that the word "jesting" is occasionally employed in an evil sense in the Greek writers, similar to that which

we conceive St. Paul had in mind. But the usual word for vulgar buffoonery is associated with those who hung about the altars. In the ancient world, the element of sensuality in religion made the use of ribaldry all too common. Yet there is need for the Christian, while exercising a healthy, invigorating freedom of speech which permits those happy turns of sentences in a playful sense (that is usually associated with the word used by St. Paul for jesting), to bear in mind that levity in sacred things may become habitual and inflict grave injury on himself and others. We are reminded in the Book of Ecclesiastes that there is a time to laugh. That seems to mean that God has appointed to men seasons of mirth and of sadness. But it is true that the Christian must use care both in the subjects and in the objects of his humorous sallies.

If due regard be had to the three conditions outlined above, freedom of speech will be exercised in consistency with the Divine provisions, which at once permit and regulate this freedom.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CHRISTIAN AND THOSE OF OTHER RACE

THE STOICS, partly because of their philosophy, and partly because of the centrality of government in the Macedonian era, were cosmopolitans. Zeno was himself of mixed race, and could not therefore have the strong feeling of the distinction between Greek and barbarian that animated his predecessors. All men participate in reason, and all men are brethren. Even the religious expression of the common Fatherhood of God is found in the Stoic philosophy. Seneca contended that slavery does not affect the whole man. Only the body belongs to his lord; his heart belongs to himself. He also anticipates the language of Paul, claiming that we are all slaves, and therefore the human slave is a friend of a lower rank. Yet, coupled with these generous sentiments which may be said to have prepared the way for Christianity, there is a strange acquiescence in existing conditions. Slavery, indeed, is regarded as unjust by some of the Stoics, but the general attitude was that the whole question is immaterial.

The Christian can scarcely fall below the Stoic level. He does not ignore existing evils, but is called upon to remember that Christianity is truly "catholic." It transcends all boundaries of time and space. It overleaps all distinctions of creed and class. In Christ Jesus there is neither Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free. The possibility of union with God, which belongs to all men without distinction of race or class, makes it impossible for the Christian to regard existing divisions as anything but temporary. All men are truly brethren, because all alike are the subjects of one God, and the objects of His eternal love. The picture of the new and purified kingdom given in the book of Revelation informs us that the nations shall walk in the light of it. It may be admitted that the phrase "of them which are saved" is an interpolation, but if it is an early comment, it is in full harmony with the purpose of the book. But statements of this kind do not remove from consideration the fact that nationalities exist in our present stage of

development, and they have their purpose in leading men forward to the full realisation of the unity of men in God and Christ.

Archbishop Trench in his *Study of Words* directs attention to the period in Italian life when the foreign custom or article was esteemed by everyone as superior to the home product, and regards it quite rightly as a time of decadence. While we must condemn the stupid slogan, "My country, right or wrong," we must be on our guard against substituting for it the equally stupid slogan, "My country, always wrong." There is a value in sectional development, even when it is quite rightly conceived as an element in a process, which will ultimately transcend it. A false nationalism is engendered when people are invited to regard with contempt and suspicion those who lie outside their immediate borders. The modern fiction of a pure Nordic race seems to be working considerable mischief amongst our Teutonic neighbours. It is rather an amazing circumstance that a body of people who have been seeking to prove by rigid blood tests that we have close affinity with anthropoid apes should encourage at the same time a revolt against the Semitic people. It illustrates the fact that the much vaunted advance of science can do but little to stem popular movements which fall in with the temper of the people.

But there is a true nationalism which it is the duty of the Christian to esteem and reverence. Our Lord Himself displayed a passion for Jerusalem which went beyond the limits of general regard for all mankind. St. Paul had the same intense devotion to his nation, notwithstanding his strong declaration that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This national spirit has its roots in a definite culture, tradition and family connection. These things cannot be ignored, and the Christian is not called upon to ignore them, but rather to develop them for the benefit of mankind. The cosmopolitanism which takes little account of the cherished convictions of a race has never proved of much service either to the race from which the cosmopolitan has sprung, or to the world which, in a different sense from John Wesley, he claims as his parish. So long as different standards of general conduct are prevalent, so long differences of race will go beyond mere geographical boundaries and enter into the spiritual qualities of the soul.

The providence of God is the Christian's guide. The place in which he finds himself, and the people from whom he has sprung, have the first claim upon his consideration and regard.

The Christian missionary is the better missionary because he brings to other peoples the long tradition in which he has been nurtured. There are limits to the legitimacy of "going native" even when the words are robbed of the sinister significance that attaches to them in popular speech. It is sometimes urged that inasmuch as all men are alike subjects of a common redemption, all distinctions should be broken down, and pleas are frequently made for the removal of all State regulations that prohibit indiscriminate migration, or impose laws of a different kind on a native and a white population. Sometimes some intemperate language is used, and the claim is made that any Christian who supports these restrictions is so far denying an essential principle of the Gospel.

But there are two sides to the question. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were forbidden under severe penalties to mingle themselves with the surrounding nations. Modern advocates of total freedom of intercourse between all peoples adduce this as an example of the imperfect nature of the old revelation. They regard it as an instance of those things which should be done away. But a moment's reflection will enable the student of social concerns to perceive that a small community with a distinctive spiritual message had really no hope of survival as an independent entity with a definite contribution to make to the spiritual progress of the world, unless some such restriction was observed. The law was never carried out absolutely, but the existence of the law saved Israel from becoming one with the peoples round about her, and forfeiting her hope that Gentiles should "come to her light and kings to the brightness of her rising." Sometimes the student is tempted to say that the Bible is much more commonsense than many of its ardent admirers, and that the Christianity of the New Testament is much saner than many earnest Christians.

The conditions which govern Old Testament prohibitions against mixed marriages, and complete freedom of intercourse with surrounding peoples, prevail today. A Christian must recognise that the slow development of a people under

the influence of the gospel has created a type of civilisation which, however imperfect, contrasts favourably with the moral condition of those who have had no such experience. He has to ask himself the question, Are the essential elements in our national development worthy of preservation? If the answer is the affirmative, then ethical justification may be found for a certain measure of restriction where national life is threatened at its very base. The threat in this instance is not the threat of forceful extinction, but the subtler menace of peaceful penetration. If a State can protect its national life against an aggressor, it is equally its duty to protect its national customs against the disintegrating influence of an inferior civilisation, which might first penetrate its ranks, and then destroy its national Ethics.

The defence for such an attitude on Christian principles must be that just as Israel had a heritage which she was commanded to guard, not only for herself, but for the nations of the world, even so the Christian today has a heritage which must be preserved if the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is to be ultimately triumphant in the lands where now He is not known. The limits of intercourse must be determined with regard to the well-being of the community at large. This well-being must not be conceived as a peculiar benefit to a superior race, but as an expediency devised in the interests of both parties. No doubt it is difficult for a nation with a teeming population to understand the reserve of peoples otherwise situated, but the very surplus in the population offers the greatest threat to national integrity in the sense that we have now conceived it.

The extravagances of claims to the possession of pure Nordic blood, or the brutality which has frequently manifested itself in races that conceive themselves to be dominant, should not obscure the fact that in a true national development there is involved a sacred trust from God which cannot be imperilled without inflicting injury on the world at large. Again to quote a figure from the Revelation, the true ideal is realised when the nations bring their wealth and glory into the perfect city founded by God. But the nations must bring their wealth, and must not suffer it to be dissipated in a hasty effort to manifest goodwill at the expense of a truer and higher civilisation.

The Christian's Duty to Those of Other Race

As has been suggested above, the limitation in the effort to give equality to those of other race, which has been occasioned by differences of cultural development, standards of living, and, above all, varying moral and spiritual conceptions, has been extended, owing to our imperfect spiritual apprehension, to cover the idea that undeveloped peoples have not the same rights as the so-called superior races. The colour problem has not been solved in any country where the native population might conceivably threaten white domination. Christian nations have not succeeded in meeting this difficulty, and have often become a reproach because of the harshness of their attitude to those who, by stress of circumstances, have become dependent upon them. Exaggeration here, as elsewhere, must be avoided, and people of British stock may justly claim that their treatment of native races, while very far from the ideal, compares favourably with the attitude of other nationalities.

The only standard that can remedy this perversion of an undoubted fact is the standard which demands that to every man shall be given according to his capacity. It may be straining a parable, but our Lord seems to indicate that as there are diffusions of individual talents in varying measure, so in the wider sphere of national life the same law prevails. It is the duty of the Christian and the duty of a Christian nation to give to all peoples the right and opportunity to exercise their gifts to the fullest advantage. It is the further duty of the Christian to bring to bear upon this exercise of gifts the stimulating influence of the revelation of God.

St. Paul grappled with the difficulty in his day. He recognised that the conditions of society, operative for long centuries, had made differences in human capabilities which could not be surmounted in a short space of time. Hence he issued the injunction "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called," and supplemented it with the advice that each man should use such powers as came to him, whether in bondage or in freedom, for the glory of God. It is the supreme sin against an undeveloped people to withhold from them the gospel of the grace of God. What is called missionary activity is a paramount obligation on the Christian Church. It is obviously a sin for a

nation to retard cultural progress. The aim of all righteous government should be to bring the subjects into a condition of equality, and every necessary restriction should be justified on the ground that only through these temporary limitations can equality ultimately be attained.

The Christian cannot be content with any form of civilisation that is simply " broad-based upon (the) people's will." While he recognises the advantage of a system of laws that has the sanction and support of a practically united populace, he must go further and insist that the true ideal of human progress lies in submission to the will of God. It is for this reason that the duty of evangelisation has a broad ethical base. Apart from the direct command of our Lord, concerning which Dr. Chalmers writes, " These parting words of our Saviour ere He ascended to His Father may not be enough to quell the anxieties of the speculative Christian, but they are quite enough to decide the course and the conduct of the practical Christian " (*Lectures on the Romans*, Lecture VIII, p. 87), there is a wide experience of history which demonstrates that true progress has never been separated from the true revelation of the Most High.

SECTION E. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER XXX

CHRISTIANITY, PROGRESS, AND THE ULTIMATE FUTURE

And so we come to the end of our task. The aim throughout has been to set forth general principles, in the confidence that the prayerful believing soul will find opportunities for their particular application. Casuistry has been avoided. The writer also trusts that no undue dogmatism on matters of great and critical moment has been obtruded.

The Christian and Progress

In these days there are three competing systems which present themselves as alternatives to the method which has been enforced throughout this book. Some place their faith in scientific Humanism. They believe that culture without Christianity will effect a moral reformation and bring in the golden age. Others recognise that culture, at least in its narrower sense of scientific investigation and reflection upon the course of nature, must be confined to a comparatively small section of the human race. Its influence will extend far beyond its borders, but will have only an indirect effect upon the great toiling masses of the world. In such a country, for example, as old Russia, there was a select company of highly educated people equal to that which can be found in any civilised community. But there was also a huge body of serfs living on the very verge of existence, whose entire energies were expended in the struggle against destruction.

Mindful of problems of this kind, the advocates of scientific Humanism find themselves confronted by an intelligent body of men who contend that in the organisation and reconstruction of industrial life there lies the hope of a final emancipation of man. The demand for shorter hours, more leisure, the living wage, the adjustment of mechanisa-

tion to the needs of the worker—in a word, all the problems associated with economic division of labour and equitable distribution of raw material—offer evidence of the widespread character of this second solution of the problems of a weary world.

A modern powerful force has arisen which seeks to take over the entire programme of reformed industrialism, but contends that it is impossible to secure a remedy until the element of private gain is entirely excluded from our industrial life. Karl Marx is the prophet of the new revolution, and Bellamy in England gave it, years ago, a very attractive form. Communism has come to the front, and some of its ardent advocates would even deny property in the family. They would ask us to return to Plato's conception that children should be taken from their parents, and brought up with the pleasing fiction that the State is responsible for their existence and their care. Experiments in this direction on a wide scale in Russia are still in the early stages, and it is not possible to draw any really scientific conclusions from the experiences of that country, seeing that Communism is not complete and Capitalism has not been wholly destroyed.

The alternative which the Christian suggests, and which we believe is the only final solution of the world's anguish, is the leadership of Christ. With many of the features of Humanism, Industrialism, and Communism, it is possible to have great sympathy. Some of them most certainly are not excluded by the adoption of the new solution. But the distinctive feature which they all tend to ignore, as formulated systems, is the need of repentance and the possibility of " the new birth." To the Christian, ameliorative measures of the kind proposed, where they are not in his judgment detrimental to true progress, are nevertheless in the nature of a lopping off of the branches of a upas tree, whose deadly roots remain untouched, and which must therefore spring up again. The whole course of our investigation in this book must be offered as justification for this position.

The Christian gospel incurred its most bitter opposition at the beginning of its career. The one thing that the old pagan world refused to grant was the exclusive claim of the Christian system. Had the Christians been content to place their Christ in the Pantheon and to advocate their

system as possibly the best of a number of good alternatives, opposition would not have attained the dimensions which history records. But the Christians found themselves unable to adopt this position, and a moment's reflection establishes the fact that belief in the Incarnation makes such a position intolerable. The gospel claims absoluteness. It is the final message of God to men, and as such must stand or fall by its inherent merit. It cannot compromise with other rivals, and the essence of the Gospel is what may be called its inwardness. It claims that the true development of human life is conditioned by an inward operation of God the Holy Ghost commencing with the individual heart, radiating its influence in the family, and extending, by a continuation of the same principle, to an inward regeneration of the nation. Over and over again, at a certain stage of Christian development, progress in this manner has been considered to be too slow, and external aids have been sought to expedite the process. In every instance the new schemes have proved in some measure incompatible, and religion has only been revived in its truest sense by a return to the gospel insistence on personal regeneration. And yet the gospel claims to be universal. It is intensely individual from one aspect, but the needs with which it deals, although they may burden the individual soul, are also common to the whole of humanity. The gospel goes to the root of man's problem, assuring him that it originates in an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, and seeks to remedy the evil by a change of heart. It is necessary to emphasise in these days that nothing can take the place of this message.

But the Gospel, with its insistence upon individual responsibility, places men in the world full of life and hope. The apathy of the ancient philosopher is foreign to the spirit of the Christian. There can be no indifference to any human characteristic. Desires are not conquered by stern repression, they are to be harnessed to the work of God. The inherent dualism of the Stoic system found expression in Christianity in the powerful advocacy of asceticism. But the Christian prefers, if he be rightly instructed, to turn asceticism into self-denial, making his abandonment of any of the legitimate exercises that belong to human life simply a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The Christian holds himself aloof from doubtful pleasures because his will

is bound to the will of God. He denies himself legitimate enjoyment in certain circumstances because the will of God has bred in his soul the love of man. For his neighbour's sake, not for his own salvation, he toils laboriously and eschews days of ease. Nor does the Christian system countenance any mere passivity. The ancient philosopher often counselled his pupil to submit to fate. He took with a real, or pretended, complacency the incidents of life. Joy and sorrow were beyond his control, and he left the distribution of them severely alone as belonging to the business of the gods. The Christian knows his Lord, and cannot acquiesce in this attitude of inert resignation. As a true personality he recognises that circumstances are, if not wholly, at least largely, within his control. The God Whom he worships is not a blind Fate aimlessly flinging down the joys and sorrows of life. His God is a God of righteousness and truth, with a holy purpose that operates in every part of the world. The Christian, therefore, bends his energy to bring himself and his fellows into line with the Divine purpose, realising that thus, and thus only, can be fulfilled under God's guidance and finally by His Personal intervention the ideal of a golden age, which has floated before the minds of men since the very dawn of civilisation.

The Christian and the Ultimate Future

What of the future? We are reminded of St. Paul's magnificent period in the Epistle to the Romans: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Man from the very beginning has felt his incompleteness. He reaches forward with eagerness to a fuller development which seems continually to elude his grasp. The world is moving on, and at every stage in its progress doleful voices have been raised asking, "Whither are we tending?" The Christian gospel gives a definite and an optimistic answer. "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." Amidst all the confusion one Voice has been heard calling men to repentance and faith. It is the Voice of the Son of God, Who assures

a struggling humanity that in Him it may find peace. Man cannot be content with a golden future in which he has no share. If we are to have a completeness that satisfies us we must be units in the complete order ourselves. It is for this reason that the message of the individual redemption of men throbs with hope. Even death itself does not destroy the soul that trusts in Christ. It is only in the Christian hope of personal immortality that we can look for the realisation of our fondest longings and the apportioning by God to us of our share in the development of the complete order.

Therefore, we may say that Christianity alone points on to the ideal goal of human endeavour. It has this unique feature, which has been apprehended dimly in every sound philosophy, that the goal is realised because in some sense it is already present. The Divine Spirit, Who renews the souls of men, is Himself the End of all true desires. He is working continually to bring us to that stage of spiritual power which He represents pre-eminently. The Christian does not regard the world as an accident. It is rather the outgoing of the energy of God, and so supreme is His Divine power that sin, which is truly an accident, is not permitted to hinder the realisation of His purpose. He will bring man to a state of perfect knowledge in which, while still retaining his finiteness as a creature, he will reflect adequately, though not completely, the glory of his Creator. In that day God shall be all in all, and everything that offends shall be gathered out of the completed Kingdom.

Historically, there is much that justifies this hope of the Christian. Christianity has achieved progressive triumphs. We do not attach as much importance as some to Darwin's contribution of £5 to the missions working in Tierra del Fuego, because we cannot conceal from ourselves the uneasy conviction that a gentleman who had never mastered any language but English, and spent two hours investigating the speech of the natives, which he said sounded like the barking of a dog, is scarcely a trustworthy witness as to the measure of culture possessed by them. But Charles Darwin also contributed to missionary effort in his home village, where at least he was conversant with both the language and habits of the people. He did so on the ground that a great moral change had been effected by the simple evangelist, who had thus won the admiration of the scientist.

And Christianity has justified this encomium. Whatever good may be traced in our modern civilisation is found best developed in that type which made the gospel of Christ, however imperfectly understood, the base of its laws. The course of the development of Christian principles has not been uniform. Sometimes great waves of spiritual enthusiasm have driven people forward, and then there has been an ebb, and many have been swept back by the suction of the retreating wave. But, although the progress has not been uniform, progress has been made. The Christian nations are furthest on the road of cultural advance. They have wrung from Nature some of her great secrets. They are also furthest on the road towards social amelioration. With all the faults that can still be urged against Christian peoples, regard for the sacredness of human personality is more pronounced amongst them than amongst any other peoples in the world. And the challenge of Stanley, to try out the message of the Gospel amongst the warlike and brutal Baganda, has afforded to the world in recent times a further evidence that it is the power of God unto salvation.

We may be told that within the bosom of Christianity itself new feelings are now stirring, and that the future may reveal that Christianity is but a stage, a useful stage, which is destined to be shortly superseded by the religion of humanity, whatever that may mean. But the Christian's Book, the Bible, does not leave him without guidance in view of this strange development. The Old Testament reminds him that the people of God more frequently forgot, than acted upon, their vocation. There were periods of great depression. Elijah could say, mistakenly but sincerely, "I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord." Yet the Old Testament revelation displayed amazing recuperative power. In the New Testament, when apostasy reaches its height, and the chosen nation cry "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him, crucify Him," a new era of faith and hope for the world began, and the one hundred and twenty faithful are the pioneers of a world advance.

The same character may be traced in the history of Christian development. This is not the first time that a ferment within the body has threatened its existence. The Christian believes in the living God, and even though, when the Son of Man cometh, faith will scarcely be found on the earth, the very circumstances of the first Advent

strengthen the Christian in the conviction that at such a time the Son of Man will come. Christianity is being prepared for its next and greatest triumph in Christ. The times and the seasons are in God's hands, and we have no desire to multiply the ingenious prognostications concerning the future. But one thing is certain: the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church of God. The reason is easily found. No power can prevail, *just because it is the Church of God.*

The Ethics of Christ are absolute. Here, there is no possibility of deviation without a violation of the eternal principles of truth. They search the inmost secrets of the heart. The soul that bows in humility before the plain teaching of the Word of God is ever constrained to say, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

The Ethics of Christ are permanent, because they pass from the incident of time and circumstance, and deal with the realities of human guilt and human restoration. They have proved themselves capable of adjustment to a multitude of varying conditions, yet they have never changed in essential character.

The Ethics of Christ are universal, because they deal directly with the two great realities in the moral universe, God and man. Yet we find that a study of Christian Ethics reveals the fact that the simple sayings of the Master, and the further elements contained in the revelation of God, provide a broad solution of the problems and antitheses of ordinary Philosophy. They offer us a synthesis of all that is best in the struggling aspirations of man.

It is therefore that as Christians we accept with thankfulness the message of our Master, "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." He has come that we "might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly." With unabated confidence we utter again the ancient prayer, modelled into beautiful English by Cranmer, that master of phrase:

"O God, Who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of Whom standeth our eternal life, *Whose service is perfect freedom*: Defend us Thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in Thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.—SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

SECTION A.—SOME BASIC PROBLEMS

Chapter IV: The Moral "Self"

(The Bible frequently uses the term "heart" for the centre of man's being, for the springs of his actions, etc.)

Gen. ii. 7; Lev. xix. 17; Deut. xiii. 6-11; 1 Sam. xviii. 1; Psa. xix. 12, lxxiii. 26, cv. 25, cxxxix. 23 (the whole Psalm should be studied and other similar Psalms); Prov. iv. 23; Isa. xxvi. 9; Matt. xv. 19; Mark vii. 21-22; Luke xxi. 34; Rom. v. 5, vi. 17, vi., vii., viii.; Col. iii. 15; Titus i. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 10.

Chapter V: Are Desire, Will, Motive and Intention to be Differentiated?

Desire.—1 Chron. xii. 38; Isa. xxvi. 9; Matt. xiii. 17; Mark ix. 35; Luke xii. 34; 1 Cor. xiv. 1; Titus iii. 1; Heb. xi. 26.

Will.—Gen. xlix. 6; Judg. viii. 25; 2 Chron. vii. 11; John vii. 17; Rom. vii. 18; Phil. ii. 13; 2 Tim. iii. 12; Titus iii. 8.

Motive.—1 Sam. xvi. 7; John xxi. 15-17; Rom. vii. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Col. iii. 22-23.

Intention.—Exod. ii. 14; 1 Kings viii. 17, 18; Psa. xxi. 11, Matt. xxi. 30; John xiii. 28; Acts v. 39; 1 Cor. x. 6; Heb. iv. 12. (See many other Scripture references—with the aid of an analytical concordance.)

Chapter VI: The Meaning of Character and Conduct

Mark vii. 20-23 (fruits); Rom. i. 21, 32, viii. 6; 1 Thess. ii. 10; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 15; Titus ii. 3; Heb. iii. 12; James i. 8.

Chapter VII: The Moral Judgment

1 Sam. xxv. 3; 2 Sam. xix. 35; 1 Kings iii. 9, 11, iv. 29, vii. 14; Job viii. 10; Psa. xiv. 2, cxix. 17, 104, Prov. i. 5, ii. 2, 6, 9, 11, iii. 13, iv. 5-7, xvi. 1, 9, xxviii. 5 (note especially the emphasis on moral judgment in the Proverbs and the Psalms); Eccl. viii. 5; Isa. xi. 2, 3; Ezek. xliv. 23; Luke vi. 45; Rom. x. 2; 1 Cor. ii.

14, 15, xii. 10, xiv. 29; Eph. v. 17; Phil. i. 9, 10; Heb. iv. 12, 13, v. 12-14.

Chapter VIII: What is Conscience?

Gen. ii. 16, 17, iii. 1-13; John iii. 19-21, viii. 9; Acts xxiii. 1, xxiv. 16, xxvi. 9; Rom. i. 21-32, ii. 1-16, ix. 1; 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4; x. 23-33; 2 Cor. i 12; 1 Tim. i. 5, 19, iii. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3; Heb. x. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 19, iii. 16-21; 1 John i. 7.

SECTION B.—NATURAL ETHICS

Chapter XI: What is the Universal Moral Standard?

A. "*Law.*"—Exod. xx.; Deut. v.; Psa. xix., cxix.; Eccl. xii. 13; Matt. v., vi., vii., viii. (as interpreted by one school of thought), xii. 30, xxii. 37-40; Gal. iii. 19-25.

B. "*Happiness.*"—The book of Ecclesiastes.

SECTION C.—THE DISTINCTIVE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Chapter XIII: Christianity as a Life System: Transcending Natural Ethics

The Christian Message as the Revelation of the Good.—Lev. xi. 45, xix. 2; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Isa. xlix. 9, 10, 11; Rom. xiv. 23; 1 Cor. xi. 25; Eph. i. 11; James i. 17; 1 John ii. 7, 8, iv. 19.

Chapter XIV: The Divine Sovereignty and its Implications

The Will of God as the Norm.—Psa. xxxii. 8; Matt. v. 45; Mark x. 18; Acts v. 29; Rom. ix. 20, 21, xii. 1-2; 1 Cor. i. 30, xii. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 8-18; Eph. i. 5, v. 1, 17; Phil. ii. 13; Heb. x. 8, 9, xiii. 20, 21; James i. 17-20.

(*a*) *The Work of* "*New Creation.*"—Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. vii. 31; Rev. xxi. 5.

(*b*) *Law of God.*—Exod. xx.; Deut. v.; Matt. xxii. 37-40; Mark xii. 30; Rom. iv. 15, xiii. 7-10; Gal. iii. 19-25. Principles of Law.—Matt. v. 17-48, xi. 29, 30; Luke vi. 1-5. Law of

Love.—Matt. xxii. 34-40; Mark xii. 28-34; Luke x. 25-37; Rom. xiii. 10.

(*c*) *Will of God and Relationship to Christ.*—Matt. xii. 46-50; Mark iii. 31-35; Luke viii. 19-21.

Chapter XV: Man a Fallen Spiritual Being

Job xiv. 14; Rom. i., ii., iii. 9-23, v. 12-14, vii. 11-14; 1 Cor. ii. 14; Eph. ii. 1-3, 12.

Chapter XVI: Significance of Christ—Justification by Faith

Psa. cxxx. 3; Mark ix. 24; Rom. i.–v., viii. 1, 31-34; 1 Cor. i. 30, 31; 2 Cor. v. 10, 11; Gal. ii. 15, iii. 24, vi. 14; Phil. iii. 8-14, 20, 21; Col. i. 16, 25-29, ii. 10-17, iii. 1-4; Heb. i. 1-12, v. 1–viii. 6, x. 5-9.

The New Creation in Christ.—John iii. 3-8; 1 Cor. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 13, v. 24-28; Col. iii. 10-15; 2 Pet. iii. 13; 1 John v. 20.

Relation to Law.—The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.–vii.); Rom. iii., iv., v., vii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 56; Heb. viii. 10.

Chapter XVII: The Significance of the Holy Spirit—The Law of Liberty

Isa. xi. 2; John xiv., xv., xvi.; Acts xix. 1-7; Rom. viii. 1-27; 1 Cor. ii. 9-16, iii. 16, 17, xii. 3; Gal. iv. 6, 7; v. 16-24.

The Law of Liberty.—Acts xv. 7-31; Rom. viii. 2-4; 2 Cor. iii. 13-18; Gal. iii. 21-25, v. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 16.

Chapter XVIII: The Christian's Responsibility to the Holy Spirit

Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 29, 30; John vi. 63; Rom. v. 5, viii. 26, 27, xiv. 17; Gal. v. 16-18; Eph. iv. 30, v. 18; 1 Thess. v. 19; James i. 22-25; 1 John i. 7-9.

SECTION D.—THE MORAL (CHRISTIAN) LIFE

Chapter XIX: Christian Duty and Christian Virtue

Duty.—Eccl. xii. 13; Micah vi. 8; Matt. v. 20, xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 4-6, 19, xii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. x. 31; 1 Tim. v. 7; James i. 22-25.

Virtue.—Psa. xxxii. 2; John xv. 1-10; Rom. xii., xiii., xiv.,

xv.; 2 Cor. v. 15; Gal. v. 22, 23; Eph. i. 4, ii. 10, iv. 22-32; Phil. ii. 5-11, iii. 14-16; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Tim. v. 7; James ii. 24; 2 Pet. i. 2-11; 1 John (the whole Epistle).

Chapter XX: The Personal Life of the Christian

Matt. v. 16, xi. 29, 30, xii. 33-37, xvi. 25; Luke xii. 16-34; Rom. xiv. 19; 1 Cor. vi. 12; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Gal. v. 25, 26, vi. 7-8; Eph. iv. 20-32; 1 Thess. iv. 1-7, v. 22, 23; Titus ii. 5-12; James i. 26, 27, ii. 26; 1 Peter (the whole Epistle)—particularly 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12.

The Relative Importance of the Soul.—Matt. v. 29, 30, vi. 33, xvi. 24-27; Mark viii. 34-38; Luke ix. 23-26; 2 Pet. i. 10.

Asceticism Discouraged.—Col. ii. 20-23.

Chapter XXI: The Christian and the Community

Matt. xxv. 31-46; Luke xiv. 7-15; Acts xi. 26; Rom. xii. 1-18, xiii. 8-14, xiv. 1-3; 1 Cor. x. 32, 33, xii. 12-31; 2 Cor. vi. 14-18; Eph. iv. 1-32; Heb. xii. 12-15, xiii. 1-3; James i. 26–ii. 26; 1 Pet. i. 22, 23, iv. 8-11; 1 John iv. 20.

Chapter XXIII: The Christian and Sex Relations

Gen. ii. 24; Deut. xxiv. 1-5; Matt. v. 27-32, xxii. 23-32; Mark xii. 18-27; Luke xx. 27-38; John viii. 1-11; 1 Cor. vi. 9-18, vii. 1-40; Eph. v. 22-33; 1 Tim. iv. 3; Heb. xiii. 4.

Christ and Divorce.—Matt. xix. 3-12; Mark x. 1-12; Luke xvi. 18.

Manner of Dealing with Immorality in the Church.—1 Cor. v. 1-13.

Qualifications of Elders and Deacons.—1 Tim. iii. 1-16, v. 1-25, vi. 1-14; Titus i. 5-9; 1 Pet. v. 1-4.

Sins of Church.—1 Cor. i. 11, 16, iii. 3, v. 1–vi. 11, xi. 17-34; Gal. iii. 1, iv. 8-11; Col. iii. 8-9; Rev. ii., iii.

Chapter XXIV: The Christian and the Family

Eph. v. 21-33, vi. 1-9; Col. iii. 18-22; 1 Tim. ii. 8-15; Titus ii. 4; Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 1-7.

Chapter XXV: The Christian and the Economic Order

Gen. i. 28-30, iii. 17-19, xi. 1-9; Matt. vi. 9-24, xix. 16-30; Mark x. 17-25; Luke xii. 27-34, xviii. 18-30; 1 Cor. vii. 29-31; 2 Thess. iii. 7-12; 1 Tim. v. 18, vi. 1-10; James v. 1-6.

Usury.—Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 35-46; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20; Luke vi. 34, 35.

Tribute.—Matt. xxii. 15-22; Mark xii. 13-17; Luke xx. 19-26.
Equality.—Matt. xx. 25-28; Luke xxii. 25-27.
Ownership.—Matt. xx. 15.

Chapter XXVI: The Christian and the State

2 Sam. xxiii. 3; Prov. viii. 15, 16; John xv. 18-25; Acts iv. 19-21, v. 29, xix. 23-41; Rom. xiii. 1-7; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 1-3; Titus iii. 1, 2; Heb. xiii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 13-18.
The State's Irksome Requirements.—Matt. v. 21-24, 38-48; Luke vi. 27-36; Rom. xii. 17-21; 1 John iii. 15.
Punishment.—Gen. ix. 6.
Free Speech.—Acts v. 38, 39.

Chapter XXVII: The Christian and the Church

Matt. xvi. 17, 18, xviii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 42-47, iv. 33-37, vi. 1-7, xi. 19-30, xxi. 18-26, xxvi. 14; Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. iii. 16, xii. 12-31; Gal. iii. 26-28; Eph. ii. 11-22, iv. 1-16, v. 25-33; Col. i. 18-29; Heb. x. 24, 25; Rev. xix. 6-9.
Church Discipline.—Matt. xviii. 15-20; 1 Cor. v. 1–vi. 8, x. 17, xi. 1-34.
Christian Ministry.—1 Cor. xii. 4-31, xiv. 23-40; Gal. vi. 1-6, 10; Eph. iv. 11-16, v. 20; Col. ii. 19, iii. 15.

Chapter XXVIII: The Christian and Culture

1 Cor. i. 17–ii. 16; Col. ii. 1-23.

Chapter XXIX: The Christian and Those of Other Race

Isa. lvi. 8; the book of Jonah; John x. 16, xvii. 20; Acts x. 9-48, xiv. 27, xv. 7-9, xvi. 6-10, xxviii. 2, 8; Gal. iii. 26-29; Col. iii. 11.

SECTION E.—CONCLUSION

Chapter XXX: Christianity, Progress, and the Ultimate Future

Progress.—Luke ii. 40, 52; Eph. iv. 13.
The Ultimate Future.—Rom. viii.; Revelation.
Responsibility to God and Rewards.—Matt. xxv. 14-46.
Epilogue.—Rev. xxii. 10-12.

APPENDIX II.—QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTORY

1. Why is the study of Christian Ethics of vital importance today? Illustrate its importance.

2. "The world is not as it should be and is certainly not perfect. Should the Christian persist in acting, and teaching others to act, as though it were perfect?"

3. Is it possible to think of *Christian* Ethics (as distinct from the Ethics taught in the schools) and to treat it as a distinct department of science when the principles laid down in any science ought to be of universal acceptance?

4. Are you sure that you understand fully the meaning of the words "right" and "wrong," which so easily spring to your lips?

5. Why should you not do as you please, so long as you do not injure anyone else?

6. Are distinctions of "right" and "wrong" to be regarded as resulting from the requirements of the Divine Command? Or are they to be regarded either as (i) the product of a long tradition of rules, which were originally erected to defend private interests, or (ii) as derived from scientific thinking in the same way as, for example, the propositions in Geometry or the laws of other branches of science?

7. What is the difference between "hypothetical" and "categorical" demands? Can the principles of Ethics be classified under either of these titles?

8. What laws do you regard as absolutely binding on every living man? Is it possible to reduce them to a few axioms or generalisations? If so, write out your answer and ask a friend who has studied Ethics (*e.g.*, your Vicar or Minister) to criticise it.

9. Do you know of a system of Ethics which can be regarded as wholly satisfactory? Give your reasons.

10. Do you believe in "casuistry" (or the Art of Ethics)? What is your reason? Have you any other views which

are more satisfactorily related to the meeting of the problems which casuistry attempts to solve?

11. What are the relations of Ethics and Philosophy; Ethics and Theology; Ethics and Psychology?

12. Is the admixture of Humanism and Christianity, upon which a great deal of so-called "Christian" teaching is based, encouraged by the New Testament? Does it much matter that Christians do not always acknowledge the clear distinction made in Scripture between "revealed knowledge" and knowledge which is ordinarily obtained by scientific methods?

SECTION A.—SOME BASIC PROBLEMS

Chapter IV: The Moral Self

1. What do you understand as "self" in relation to moral problems? What is the cause of the feeling of disharmony which you experience when you have disobeyed what you regard as the "inner law"?

2. What do you know of the various theories as to the relationship between body and mind? Do any of these bear on the problem of what we are to understand by the "moral self"?

3. Have the philosophical problems of sovereignty and freedom any bearing on your definition of "self" in relation to Ethics?

4. What do you mean by the phrase "my better self"? Has the use of it any bearing on the whole problem of Ethics? What term, or terms, might it be possible to substitute for it?

Chapter V: Are Desire, Will, Motive and Intention to be Differentiated?

1. Do you differentiate between desire and will? What do you believe to be the ethical significance of such a distinction?

2. Some writers have suggested that the ultimate motive which prompts a man's action is to be regarded as invariably either the pursuit of pleasure or the avoidance of pain. Do you agree with this assertion?

3. Is it possible for "abstract" reasoning to provide a

sufficient motive for right action? What, in your opinion, is the most powerful motive?

4. Examine carefully Kant's statement: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a Good Will." Do you agree with this? Does the Bible express the same thought?

Chapter VI: The Meaning of Character and Conduct

1. How do emotions exercise an influence on human conduct? What finally determines conduct?

2. A man who has been arrested sometimes excuses himself in the police court by arguing that he wasn't responsible because he was drunk at the time of committing the crime of which he is accused. Would such a case modify or add to your definitions of character and conduct?

3. Is a man's character an inherited quality, or can it be cultivated? Do you think the form of the question (as stated) is satisfactory?

Chapter VII: The Moral Judgment

1. Define "moral judgment." Some people seem to imply in their conversations that they are so "fair-minded" that they never pass moral judgment on others. Do you think that they are correct in their assessment of themselves?

2. What is your view of justice and how would you define it? Is justice a science or an art?

3. "Justice cannot consist in harming enemies and helping friends." Discuss this.

Chapter VIII: What is Conscience?

1. What do you mean by conscience? Does Psychology alter your attitude to it?

2. Is conscience to be regarded as "infallible"? If conscience can decide what is right and wrong, do we need any *external* authority?

3. Do you consider Kant's views of conscience and his theories of the moral obligation compatible with the Christian ethical system?

4. How do you explain the dilemmas into which men seem to be brought when seeking to obey their consciences?

5. Which are we Christians to obey, conscience or Christ? Or do you object to the form of this question? What do you think our Lord meant by "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

SECTION B.—NATURAL ETHICS

Chapter IX: A Review of the Schools of Thought

1. Do you understand the significance of the arguments for, and objections to, the generally accepted views as to the ultimate moral standard?

2. Is it of any real consequence to social or national well-being which school of thought comes to predominate, so long as the leaders are sincere in their beliefs and endeavour to be impartial in the application of their principles? Give your reasons.

3. Does the professed sceptic himself *really* live his daily life without some kind of moral standard?

Chapter X: What are we to Understand by "the Good"?

1. Is there a single criterion of goodness? Or is there one standard for "things" and another for people? Is there any reason for supposing that there is one standard for one person and another for a second person?

2. What are the differences between the Intuitional and Teleological views of goodness?

3. What do you think of the Utilitarian view of "the good"? Where is it defective when judged by Bible standards?

Chapter XI: What is the Universal Moral Standard?

1. Are you quite satisfied that there is an ultimate universal Moral Standard? Why?

2. Which of the views of the Moral Standard seems to you to be nearest to your own observations?

3. How does belief in a Personal God modify one's view of the Moral Standard ?

(*a*) *Law.*

1. What do you consider to be an adequate definition of law ? Is there more than one kind of law ? Which of the kinds has a place in Ethics ?

2. Do you believe in a universal law ? What is its source ? How is it applied ? What is your evidence for your statements ?

(*b*) *Happiness.*

1. Plato states " The most virtuous is the most happy; the most vicious is the most miserable." Do you agree that history, or present experience, supports his view ? Has the Bible anything to say for, or against, it ?

2. Contrast Plato's teaching on happiness with that of the New Testament.

3. If happiness is to be accepted as the ultimate criterion, what ought a man to do if the pursuit of his own happiness will bring him into direct conflict with the happiness of the majority ? Why *should* he ?

(*c*) *Evolutionary Perfection.*

1. Can you see any basic difference between the conceptions of biological evolution and social evolution ? Is it legitimate to base any conclusions on a comparison between them ? In any case, are such conceptions sufficient on which to base your ethical theory ?

2. To what extent are mind and body interrelated ? Do you consider the conduct of the average man, in any given class of society, to be the resultant of various bodily interactions and a proper balance between certain glandular secretions ?

3. If any thinker is convinced that man is the product of an age-long and universal interaction of the blind forces of Nature (which will in time produce a higher race of man), is it possible for him to regard the whole-hearted application of any one ethical theory (*e.g.*, the Christian) in any other light than as providing an example of one branch of his moral " pathology " ?

Chapter XII: Residual Problems

1. To what extent (if any) may man's will be said to be really free? What bearing has your belief on the question of merit and reward?

2. "I ought, therefore I can." Discuss the bearing of this statement on Christian Ethics.

3. When the views of science appear to be in conflict with those of commonsense, which views are we to accept? Ought we to adopt the same course in the realm of Ethics? Give reasons for, or against.

4. How far (if at all) has the study of the instincts of animals modified the older view that man is a rational being? Are you satisfied with any definition of instinct which you know, and its application to everyday life?

SECTION C.—THE DISTINCTIVE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Chapter XIII: Christianity as a Life-System

1. Can Ethics be independent of Theology? Give reasons.

2. What precise advantages (if any) over all other systems has the Christian Gospel in its ethical principles?

3. Does the New Testament teach us to regard Christianity as "the *new* law," as supplementing, or in contrast to, the *old* law? What was our Lord's teaching and Paul's?

4. "Every form of Natural Ethics is anthropocentric—man desires the *summum bonum* because it is 'good' for himself." What alteration takes place in Christian Ethics?

Chapter XIV: The Divine Sovereignty and its Implications

1. Discuss the problem of sovereignty within the sphere of the state. Do you consider it affords a parallel to the Divine Sovereignty? To what extent?

2. Is sovereignty divisible? Discuss the bearing of your reply on Ethics.

3. How does God's Omnipotence bear on the problem of the freedom of the human will?

4. Do you distinguish between the directive, and permissive, will of God? If so, on what grounds do you make such a distinction, and is it a valuable one?

Chapter XV: Man a Fallen Spiritual Being

1. Can you answer Pascal's question: "If man was not made for God, how is it that he can be happy only in God? And if he is made for God, how is he so opposite to God?"

2. Why is the problem of man's freedom so important to Theology and Ethics? Can a man make a choice which secures for himself something which is in an entirely different realm from that of his present existence? Does Theology help us at this point?

3. If man is fallen, is it just of God to expect him to lead a moral life? Give your reasons, and outline what you think is the key to the problem.

Chapter XVI: The Significance of Christ—Justification by Faith

1. Do you agree with the suggestion that the Sermon on the Mount was the "reductio ad absurdum" of the legal system of Judaism?

2. What do you consider to be the strongest possible incentive for the leading of a good life? Why?

3. If you believe that supreme goodness has been embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Example, how can a man whose bias is "always towards evil" achieve it?

Chapter XVII: The Significance of the Holy Spirit—The Law of Liberty

1. Was our Lord's teaching on Ethics to be regarded as an interim measure? Why? Or why not?

2. Do you consider it sufficient to describe the Christian life as a clash between God's claims and the claims of the "flesh" and the "devil"?

3. What bearing has the N.T. teaching concerning the "law of the Spirit" on the question of (what are sometimes called) "conflicting duties"?

Chapter XVIII: The Christian's Responsibility to the Holy Spirit

1. What are your views as to the relations between freedom and responsibility? Do the biblical statements as to the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Christian modify these in any way?

2. Ought casuistry to have any place in Christian Ethics? Do you find any need for qualifying your answer?

3. How far do your views of a future life influence your attitude to the problems of Ethics? What do the Scriptures say concerning this matter?

SECTION D.—THE MORAL LIFE

Chapter XIX: Christian Duty and Christian Virtue

1. Do you consider that "benevolence" may be regarded as the sum total of the virtues?

2. What special forms of virtue and special interpretation of "character" did Christian teaching bring to mankind, as compared with the "virtue" of the philosophers of classical times?

3. How do you understand the relationship of faith and works as taught in the New Testament? Would it help us in our efforts to lead the moral life if we could compile a complete list of the various virtues? Why?

4. What is the Christian's primary duty? Put it into one short non-biblical phrase which will form an adequate definition of duty.

5. What is the chief New Testament word, or phrase, which is used to denote Christian virtue?

Chapter XX: The Personal Life of the Christian

1. Can an irreligious man ever be regarded as good? If he can be so regarded, can he be as good as he ought to be without becoming a Christian?

2. What do you mean by a "conflict of loyalties"? Does the Bible lead us to expect that the Christian will normally find himself in conditions where loyalties will conflict?

3. Is hope of reward to be regarded as a normal, or sufficient, motive for good conduct? What was our Lord's teaching on rewards?

Chapter XXI: The Christian and the Community

1. What do you understand by the phrase "a sense of vocation"? Does a Christian normally accept, or forge, his vocation?

2. How far can a believer join in the common efforts of a non-believing community? Does Scripture encourage the idea that the Christian must only have the contacts which economic necessity forces upon him?

Chapter XXII: The Christian and Moral Institutions

1. Which do you think is the New Testament ideal for the Christian: (*a*) the monastic life and asceticism, or (*b*) good citizenship and social service, or (*c*) neither? Give Scriptures (to be kept in their context) for your answer.

Chapter XXIII: The Christian and Sex Relations

1. Can you reconcile the Old Testament and the New Testament teaching and practice in relation to marriage? Do you think that strict monogamy was intended by the Divine Creator?

2. Is a man ever justified in a time of bad economic or other abnormal conditions from departing from the Divine Law?

3. Does it matter either to God, or other people, if there are sex relations before marriage, provided that precautions are taken against certain possible contingencies? Does it matter to the present, or future, of the people concerned? Why?

4. Has Christianity any unique teaching on the question of sex relations?

Chapter XXIV: The Christian and the Family

1. Other things being equal, do you think that bachelorhood is a virtue or a failure in duty?

2. Should healthy married Christians, who have a sufficient income, provide for the possession of a fair-sized family? Is the objection that the modern State merely circulates the idea of the large family for military purposes a consideration which should weigh with Christian people?

3. Is the possession of a family of any importance in the spiritual development of the father and mother?

4. Does (*a*) Our Lord's teaching, (*b*) St. Paul's teaching regard divorce with favour or encourage a light attitude with regard to it? Has the Church or modern State the right to alter what is to be considered as the biblical view? On what grounds do you base your answer?

Chapter XXV: The Christian and the Economic Order

1. If the Christian is not going to do social work, etc., will he be able to convert a sufficient number of individuals in order to better existing conditions? What of the other people in the meantime?

2. Do you distinguish "social" Ethics and ordinary Ethics? Is there a different standard for each?

3. Is it profitable to attempt to sketch an economic scheme from the ethereal standpoint? If not, what should be our attitude to the whole problem of economic injustice?

4. Does the New Testament teach anything with regard to the Christian and private property? Does it teach that all are equal and to have equal wealth and opportunity?

5. What form of economic system do you think most favoured by Scripture?

Chapter XXVI: The Christian and the State

1. Is it ever a duty of the Christian to disobey the State? Does Scripture encourage such disobedience under normal conditions? Is Christian Ethics inferior to that of the Stoics in its estimate of the importance of civic duties?

2. What does St. Paul mean when he says that the Christian is to be subject to the powers that be "for conscience sake"?

3. Is disarmament a possibility in a world which seems to be dominated by fallen men?

4. Under what conditions would you be prepared to resist your country, even to the extent of suffering imprisonment or death?

5. Where do the rights of the State to order certain observances or prescribed beliefs end and the Christian's duty of refusing them in the interests of religion begin?

6. Do you agree with the opinion that "the interest of the established government is just"?

Chapter XXVII: The Christian and the Church

1. Why are there still class distinctions, racial feelings, etc., within Christ's Church? Does God approve of them? Ought Christians to tolerate them?

2. Granted that there is an essential unity amongst the true members of the Body of Christ (which is to be regarded as the sum "of all faithful people"), is this to be regarded as enough without outward visible unity?

3. Do you think that it is a sound view to regard the divided state of Christendom as so much specialisation within one essentially united army—each "regiment" being regarded as a unit which preserves some unique form of activity or tradition?

4. About which special sins did St. Paul repeatedly warn Christians so far as their Church-life is concerned?

5. What considerations do you regard as being in favour of, and against, a State Church?

6. Is good Churchmanship to be regarded as a Christian virtue? If yes—substantiate your claim. Where are its limits—*e.g.*, in relation to those of another Church?

7. How far does the liberty of a local community of Christians extend in relationship with the whole body of Christ? Can you see any special claims for the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and Congregational forms of government?

Chapter XXVIII: The Christian and Culture

1. Do you think European civilisation is any more Christian today than it was, say, in the years 1377, 1611 and 1815?

2. Has the State the right to use education, etc., to create for itself the type of individual it wants?

3. What do you consider to be the benefit or the losses of a purely secular education?

4. Do you think there is any connection between beauty and goodness? What is your view of the relationship between morality and Art?

5. What difference would it make for the world if Art, Literature, etc., were truly Christian? What practical difference would it make for individuals in various professions?

Chapter XXIX: The Christian and Those of Other Race

1. Is intense nationalism ever justified. What are its bad effects on (i) those who adopt it, (ii) for others?

2. How can a Church or nation preserve its own genius and traditions and yet give freely to others?

3. What is the immediate duty of the Church in English-speaking countries to those of other race? Is there any sign that the Church realises it?

4. Can a Christian conscientiously be a Government official overseas? Give your reasons?

5. How can the European Churches help those overseas—without introducing their own class distinctions, denominationalism, etc.? Is it possible?

6. Taking, say, India as an example, what do you consider to be the special contribution which Christians can make to its future?

7. Do you consider it possible for a joint civilisation to be built up, *e.g.*, in India or Africa?

SECTION E.—CONCLUSION

Chapter XXX: Christianity, Progress, and the Ultimate Future

1. To what extent is man's conception of Ethics subject to development? *E.g.*, Do you think that the scope, principle, and special applications of Christian Ethics were intended to be the same for (*a*) the early Church, (*b*) Protestant Reformers, (*c*) ourselves?

2. How far are the ethical principles of the Gospels binding on individual Christians?

3. Are the various other systems of Ethics to be " Christianised " or rejected in an uncompromising manner by the Christian ?

4. Is the highest attainment of a man one in which the " Christian conscience " completely controls every department of his life, or one in which conscience has become superfluous ?

5. What do you consider is likely to be the ultimate state of the kingdoms of this world and the final state of humanity ? On what do you base your belief ? Will what you are doing at the moment affect that result ?

6. " He shall reign . . ." Are we to assume that our present Christian activities make little or no difference to the future results ?

7. Did our Lord teach that the Kingdom of God will be brought about gradually, or that it will be brought about by a sudden crisis or Divine intervention ? Did He teach that it had already begun at the time when He was speaking ?

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